

The Blessed Virgin and all the
Company of Heaven



2/12

To

The Rev. E. H. Hardcastle

With Christmas Greetings

from S. Richards.

Dec 25. 1909

The Blessed Virgin and all the
Company of Heaven

"Sirs, ye are brethren."—ACTS vii. 26.

"Obe Maria! thou whose name
All but adoring love can claim."—JOHN KEELE.

"Patriarch, and holy Prophet, who prepared the Way of Christ,
King, Apostle, Saint, Confessor, Martyr, and Evangelist,
Saintly Maiden, godly Matron, Widows who have watched to prayer,
Joined in holy concert, singing to the Lord of all, are there.

Now they reign in heavenly glory, now they walk in golden light,
Now they drink as from a river, holy bliss and infinite;
Love and Peace they taste for ever; and all Truth and Knowledge see
In the beatific vision of the Blessed Trinity."

BISHOP WORDSWORTH OF LINCOLN.

The Blessed Virgin and all the Company of Heaven

SOME WORDS FOR PEACE

BY

A. THEODORE WIRGMAN, D.D., D.C.L.

LATE FOUNDATION SCHOLAR OF S. MARY MAGDALENE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE;
CANON OF GRAHAMSTOWN, AND VICE-PROVOST OF S. MARY'S COLLEGIATE
CHURCH, PORT ELIZABETH, S. AFRICA

AUTHOR OF

"The Prayer Book with Historical Notes and Scripture Proofs;" "The
English Reformation and the Book of Common Prayer;" "The English Church
and People in S. Africa;" "The Doctrine of Confirmation;" "The Constitutional
Authority of Bishops from the Apostolic Age to the Council of Chalcedon;" etc.

WITH A PREFACE BY THE

REV. W. J. KNOX LITTLE, M.A.

CANON OF WORCESTER CATHEDRAL; AND VICAR OF HOAR CROSS

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PREFACE.

EVERY devout Catholic Christian must sincerely welcome all attempts to draw the Anglican Communion and the rest of the Catholic Church, and, above all, the rest of the Western Church, more closely together. Such an attempt is made in this work. The writer's name is a sufficient guarantee for sound and wide theological knowledge and a truly religious, as distinguished from a controversial, temper.

Without making himself responsible for all the statements or arguments of this work, the present writer can still feel confidence in its usefulness and soundness. It has been impossible for him, for many reasons, to read the book even in proof; but *the scheme and main line of thought* on which it is founded have been placed before him by the kindness of the author, and he has been more than willing to fall in with the author's wish, and to recommend it to the study of devout and thoughtful persons both in the Anglican Communion, and in other parts of the Catholic Church.

At the present time, it appears to be of the highest

importance that devout persons among us should have a more clear view of the position of our Blessed Lady in the scheme of Redemption. We live in an age of eager debate on all the mysteries of Religion. Sound theology (as well as sound methods of Worship) is too often replaced by individual "fads" and fancies. The great liberty of our times, both in Church and State, often degenerates into licence; a neo-Protestantism, thinly veiled by some Catholic phraseology, submits everything—the most sacred—to individual private judgment, regardless of the duty of endeavouring to ascertain the mind of the Catholic Church. The fundamental doctrine of the Incarnation is discussed and handled in this way with dangerous freedom, and the results in many minds are disastrous. Two thoughts above all help to maintain a true faith as to this mighty mystery in the soul of a Christian—viz. a right belief in the Real Presence in the Blessed Sacrament, *and* a right belief in the position of Blessed Mary, Mother of God. It is this latter doctrine which the writer of the following work endeavours to make clear. Hence its value.

But more: this is not undertaken controversially, but in the spirit of Peace, as an Eirenicon, and as a help towards reunion.

The ferocities of the Reformation period are past. Even the violences of modern Protestantism are, we may hope, for serious minds, abated. It must be right to try to know and do God's Will. It must be

right for Christians, though separated on some points, at least to try to understand one another. All who hold the Catholic Faith believe and know that the Eternal Word took Human Nature upon Him, and Willed to be born as man of a Virgin Mother. This being so, that Mother, by God's Will, must hold a position of unique pre-eminence, and so the Whole Church has decreed.

If the Roman Church has, in unauthorised devotions, appeared to exaggerate her prerogatives, the Anglican Church has greatly failed in a proper recognition of them. Each part of the Church has suffered from the mistakes of each. It is certainly a Christian duty to endeavour to remove the misunderstandings which have arisen from the great quarrel in the Catholic Family. It is certainly well that men should understand that Invocation, in the sense condemned by the Anglican Article, is so condemned by the rest of Catholic Christendom, and that in the sense in which the rest of the Catholic Church use it, we, Anglicans, have a right to use it also. It is well that men should calmly consider the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, of the Assumption, of the state of the Church Triumphant, and should learn—in a calm temper of Christian forbearance—to see the true meaning of such Truths, instead of ferociously denouncing mere travesties of them.

Unbelief, and Half-belief, and Agnosticism, and Indifferentism are injuring true Religion and beclouding

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the life of souls. It is well, then, to endeavour to draw the Catholic Family together, to clear away the dust of ages of controversy, to remove misunderstandings, to try to exhibit important Truths in their due proportions and so to help towards the Reunion and Peace for which our Lord Himself prayed.

It is the merit of this book—so far as the present writer is able to grasp its teachings—that it “makes for peace” in that important department of theology which has to do with the position and prerogatives of her whom the Anglican Church, together with the rest of Catholic Christendom, speaks of as “Our Lady,” and whom Holy Scripture declares that “all generations” are to designate as “Blessed.”

“Blessed are the peacemakers.”

W. J. KNOX LITTLE.

THE COLLEGE, WORCESTER.

In Fest. Annun. B.V.M., March 25, 1905.

PREFATORY NOTE.

THE author of an active or constructive eirenicon offers himself voluntarily as a target for the slings and arrows of hostile criticism from all quarters of the Church's broken unity. He attempts to find an answer to the perplexing practical question, *How* should Christians unite? The aim of a passive eirenicon is more humble and modest. It attempts to answer the question, *Why* should Christians remain divided? Is it impossible to explain our differences in a spirit of mutual forbearance and charity? A great many persons are ready to make concessions in order to unite with the various Protestant sects, who have, so far, shown by their attitude that they do not consider the corporate reunion of Christendom a thing in itself desirable. When Count Le Maistre said that one of the advantages of the Church of England was that "she could touch those whom *we* cannot touch," he was seriously out of his reckoning with regard to present-day facts in England.

The reception both in England and America of the project of reunion known as "the Lambeth Quadrilateral" has not been encouraging. Its retention of "the Historic Episcopate" is an insuperable bar to its reception by Protestant bodies, whose history begins with Luther

and Calvin, and whose fundamental conception of the Christian Ministry involves the denial of the "Sacerdotium," and, as its consequence, the denial of Apostolic Episcopacy.

On the other hand, the Church of England, and its daughter Churches, which together compose the Anglican Communion, hold the Faith of the Œcumenical Councils as expressed in the Creeds, which the various Protestant bodies do not *eo nomine* accept. It would be strange indeed if Anglicans did not seek for reunion with the Holy See, and with the historic Christianity of the East, with the same readiness to examine points of difference which have grown up during the last three hundred years, and the same candour, with which approaches have been made to the Protestant sects. Any other attitude would traverse the spirit of our Blessed Lord's prayer, "*ut omnes unum sint.*"

It is in this spirit that I have written the following pages dealing with one great cause of our unhappy divisions. I believe that an eirenicon is possible upon this, and upon many other points which have caused bitter and envenomed controversy. I believe that loyal Anglicans can be in accord with the teaching of the majority of Christians in the world upon the subject of the honour due to the Blessed Virgin and the Saints "*in patria,*" and our relations with them in the "Communion of Saints," without any loss of whatever distinct witness God may have intended us to afford to certain special aspects of His Divine Revelation. I am absolutely convinced that the neglect amongst us of true teaching upon the position of the Blessed Virgin in the economy of Redemption has weakened our witness to the central

truth of the Incarnation, and has made possible amongst us a revival of the Cerinthian heresy with regard to the Virgin-Conception and Virgin-Birth of our Lord. I have written mainly *ad clerum*, and for such of the faithful laity as have been led to believe that the opinions of the Fathers and the Councils of the Catholic Church have a claim upon their thoughtful consideration.

I do not concern myself greatly with the adverse criticism of those who prefer their own uninformed private opinions to the judgment of the Catholic Church. It is well known that many persons, who would not rely upon the untrained and unskilled intuitions of their own individual judgment in dealing with medicine, surgery, or law, are yet ready enough to consider themselves experts in theology. That strange certitude of personal infallibility which causes a man to say of a doctrine, "I do not believe it," or of a practice, "I do not hold with it," and that therefore, "*cadit quæstio*," is one of the most untoward results of the Protestant Reformation.

I would venture to recall my brethren of the Clergy to the teaching of the Caroline Divines upon the subjects dealt with in the following pages. We need to teach as plainly as they did. They had suffered for their convictions, and they taught, in consequence, with a robust earnestness and fearlessness which too many of us admire without imitating. We cannot win popular Protestantism by a policy of compromise or surrender.

If all Catholics throughout the world could agree upon the relations of the Church Militant with the Blessed Virgin and the Saints, a great stumbling-block in the pathway of corporate reunion would be definitely removed.

Prefatory Note.

I desire to submit all that I have written to the judgment of the Catholic Church, and I pray that it may be permitted, however humbly, to serve the cause of peace through the truth.

I would crave the indulgence of my readers for the shortcomings of this volume, as a whole, and beg them to remember the difficulties inseparable from writing a work of this kind away from great libraries, and amidst the manifold interruptions and cares of a South African parish.

A. THEODORE WIRGMAN, D.D. (CANTAB.).

S. MARY'S RECTORY,
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(γ) *Virgo moriens.*

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INTRODUCTION.

CATHOLICS in communion with the See of Canterbury have cause to thank Almighty God for the fact that the English Church has not been severed from the rest of Christendom, by any positive statements in its formularies, with regard to the Catholic and Primitive veneration and reverence due to the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Saints in glory. It is of course true that the reaction against mediæval abuses left a distinct mark upon the public worship and formularies of the Church of England. But omission is not prohibition, and the protest of Article XXII. against such superstitions and errors as were aptly described as “doctrina Romanensium” may fitly be paralleled with the decree of the Council of Trent, which orders that “every superstition in connection with invoking the Saints be done away” (*omnis porro superstitio in Sanctorum invocatione . . . tollatur. Conc. Trid. Sess. xxv.*).

In this matter the English Church presents a marked contrast to the Protestant sects which owe their origin, directly or indirectly, to Luther and Calvin. The religious revolution which they inaugurated swept away the affection and honour due to the Mother,¹ and the Intimate Friends, of

An opposite line taken by the Protestant Reformation on the Continent.

¹ Some of the German Reformers may be excepted who speak with reverence of the Blessed Virgin, but they are indeed “*rari nantes in gurgite vasto.*” Protestant writers are also quoted whenever possible

The Blessed Virgin

Him Who is Very Man, by the sacred ties which bind Him to her, to them, and to us; even as He is Very God, apart from those ties, which nevertheless He willed to make, in

accordance with the Purpose of God from all Eternity. The French Calvinist Confession of 1559.

Faith (A.D. 1559) says: "We believe that all that men have imagined, with regard to the intercession of the dead Saints, is only an abuse and deceit of Satan to

lead men astray from praying aright." The Second Helvetic Confession (A.D. 1566) says:

"We neither venerate, nor revere, nor invoke the Saints, neither do we recognise them as intercessors or mediators for us with the Father."

There was, at the time of the Reformation, a strong party who would have liked to push the Church of England into doctrinal agreement with these utterances of foreign Protestantism. But, by the Providence of God, their efforts failed absolutely, and Catholics in communion with Canterbury are free to believe and teach the Catholic doctrine of the "Communion of Saints." It is unhappily the fact that

controversy has raged fiercely upon the subject of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints in glory. The abuses condemned by the Council of Trent and Art. XXII.

and by our Article XXII. were real distortions and perversions of the Catholic Faith, to which the well-worn adage, "corruptio optimi pessima," may fitly be applied. The pendulum swung too far in the direction of Honour, Veneration, and Devotion, till it touched the error of Superstition. But its backward swing of reaction caused an equal error in the direction of Dishonour, Irreverence, and Neglect. A certain type of Ultra-Protestantism deluded itself into believing that our Lord was honoured by the

in the following pages, because exceptions to the general rule are helpful in ministering to concord, and convictions formed in spite of environment are generally strong.

dishonour done to His Blessed Mother, and by the neglect of the "Communion of Saints."¹

This backward swing of the pendulum has unconsciously affected English Catholics. Many of us accept fully the teaching of the Catholic Church in theory, without carrying it into practice. Many priests are half-unconsciously cramped and fettered by the chilling influences of an un-Catholic tradition. They feel that the Catholic Revival in the English Church has to teach so many forgotten *primary* and *fundamental* doctrines of the Faith, that they practically omit the *secondary* consequences of those doctrines from their public teaching. They forget to make room for such legitimate and logical

deductions from the main truths of the Catholic Faith as are not absolutely *de fide*, or for such practices as are helpful, but not *necessary* to salvation. The Catholic Church does not debar us from entering upon the realm of reverent speculation upon matters upon which she has not made authoritative definitions, and the common instinct of Christendom can teach us many things which lie outside the formal decrees of undisputed General Councils. We may find much comfort and help in believing things and in practising devotions which the Church calls "good and profitable" (*bonum et utile*), and yet does not enjoin upon us as necessary to our salvation.² Doctrinal controversies,

¹ Apparently, however, Puritanism was capable of canonising and suggesting the invocation of a strange "saint" of its own invention. Mr. Sterry, a Puritan preacher, said of Oliver Cromwell after his death, that, "if he was of great use to the people of God when he was amongst us, now he will be much more so, *being ascended to Heaven to sit at the right hand of Jesus Christ, there to intercede for us, and to be mindful for us on all occasions*" (General Ludlow's *Memoirs*, quoted in Owen's *Dogmatic Theology*, p. 471).

² Möhler, one of the most distinguished theologians of the Roman Church in the nineteenth century, says: "It is to be borne in mind

however keenly debated, cannot debar us from the lawful use of any devotional practice of the Universal Church. If this were the case, we should be debarred from the adoration of our Blessed Lord in the Holy Eucharist on account of the disputes that have arisen concerning His Presence "under the form of Bread and Wine."

Controversy
no bar to
devotion.

When we remember that these words are taken from an authoritative statement of the Church of England,¹ and that Article XXVIII. uses the ancient Catholic phraseology when it states that "the Body of Christ is given" (*Corpus Christi datur*) in the Sacrament of the Altar, and also that the Catechism teaches our children that the Body and Blood of Christ are "verily and indeed taken and received" in that same Sacrament,—we recognise that, despite controversies, the same underlying truth is set forth by the Anglican formularies as is set forth in the Tridentine definition of the Western Church, and in the definition of the Eastern Church at the Council of Bethlehem. Philosophical differences of definition and expression may and do exist upon the subject of the Real Objective Presence of our Lord *sub speciebus panis et vini* (to use the Lateran definition

Differences of
definition on
the Holy Eu-
charist do not
hinder Euchar-
istic Adoration,
but manifest a
practical unity
of belief.

that the doctrine of the Church does not declare that the Saints *must*, but only that they *can* be invoked; since the Council of Trent says only *that it is useful and salutary* to invoke with confidence the intercession of the Saints. Of faith in the Divinity of Christ, and in His Mediatorial Office, or in His sanctifying grace, and the like, the Church by no means teaches that it is merely *useful and salutary*, but that it is *absolutely necessary* to salvation" (*Symbolism*, par. lii. p. 355).

¹ Dr. Pusey quotes these words in his University Sermon on the Holy Eucharist preached in 1853. They occur in the direction appended to the *First Book of Homilies* as to the subjects of future Homilies. Dr. Pusey quotes them as "the words of the Church of England," and none of his numerous critics were able to answer or confute his statement.

practically adopted by the Church of England), but all Catholics are agreed upon the central underlying truth of the literal acceptance of our Lord's words; "This is My Body": "This is My Blood." And if this real underlying unity exists amongst Catholics upon the Eucharistic Presence and Sacrifice (which last term has been far less obscured by controversy than the former), it will be found to exist in a still greater degree upon the matter which we are immediately considering. There is a practical agree-

Practical agreement amongst all Catholics on the cultus and invocation of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints.

ment amongst all Catholics upon the reverence due to the Blessed Virgin and the Saints, and our *invocation of their prayers*, which is at once natural and reasonable. The object of the following pages is to emphasise this doctrinal concord in the interests of the reunion of Christendom.

A controversialist could readily magnify differences of devotional practice and expression which occur in various portions of the Catholic Church. There are, to begin with,

Diversities of national temperament amongst Catholics of different practice.

differences of national temperament. The Catholic Church is for all races; and we cannot expect it to be exclusively Latin, exclusively Oriental, or exclusively Teutonic. Devotions

which harmonise with the religious poetry of the Latin races, or the devout mysticism of the Orientals, cannot be ruthlessly measured with the prosaic footrule of the Teutonic mind. It was this tendency which caused Cardinal Newman to describe a part of Dr. Pusey's "Eirenicon" as *an olive branch discharged from a catapult.*" It is of course perfectly true that Dr. Pusey exposed some very grave devotional exaggerations and errors with regard to the reverence due to the Blessed Virgin and the Saints. Of these it is necessary to say, first of all, that they are developments unauthorised by authority, and secondly, that all thoughtful Catholics would make Cardinal Newman's words concerning them

their own¹: "Sentiments such as these I never knew of till I read your book, nor, as I think, do the vast majority of English Catholics know them. They seem to me like a *bad dream*. I could not have conceived them to be said. I know not to what authority to go for them; to Scripture, or to the Fathers, or to the Decrees of Councils, or to the consent of schools, or to the tradition of the faithful, or to the Holy See, or to Reason. They defy all the *loci theologici*. . . . They do but scare and confuse me" (Newman's *Letter to Pusey*, p. 120).

Cardinal Newman on unauthorised devotional exaggeration.

It is the fear of an exaggerated and unauthoritative cultus of the Blessed Virgin, such as seemed "a bad dream" to a theologian so eminent as the late Cardinal Newman, which has caused many leaders of the Catholic revival in the Anglican Communion to treat the honour due to the Blessed Virgin and the Saints, and the kindred subject of our invocation of their intercessions, with a reserve so cold

The fear of Cardinal Newman's "bad dream" leads some Anglicans to an undue reserve.

¹ On the Continent a Congress is held periodically of all the guilds and sodalities of the Blessed Virgin. It is called the "International Marian Congress," and its object is to further and perpetuate the cultus of the Blessed Virgin. Such a body as this might be expected to encourage rather than restrain undue developments of devotion. But the exact contrary is the case. At the fifth "International Marian Congress," which opened at Fribourg on August 18th, 1902, and which included ten Bishops amongst its members, the following solemn declaration was unanimously adopted: "This assembly of sodalists in Fribourg lifts its voice aloud in order to protest solemnly against the calumny, three centuries old, that Catholics make the August Mother of God an object of adoration. The assembly, in the name of truth and justice, demands that this lie and calumny, systematically spread by official teachers and masters of religious communities separated from us, should at length cease. It calls attention to the irrefutable truth that the Catholic Church knows of no other adoration but that of the Triune God, and of Jesus Christ our Lord; and that all love and confidence in the Blessed Virgin Mary is strictly limited to such love and veneration as, according to the words of the Archangel

and cautious.¹ There appears to be a desire to dress up Catholic and primitive teaching in a special Anglican garb, and to sacrifice Catholic unity to an unnecessary assertion of a separate insular standpoint, which may be pardoned as the historical outcome of the Tudor Reformation, but which cannot be erected into a touchstone of loyalty for Catholics in communion with the See of Canterbury. The fear of unauthorised and exaggerated devotions such as Cardinal Newman deprecated ought not to drive us into an insular way of regarding what the whole Catholic Church has taught, and still teaches, with regard to the Blessed Virgin and the Saints. We need a wider outlook, and a desire to explain and understand differing statements with a view to Catholic unity and reconciliation. It is our duty humbly to remember how much of Catholic truth we and our fathers have *forgotten* since the days of the Laudian revival, with all its limitations.

We should also remember that the Tudor Reformation cannot claim *finality* as its note, even in the form in which we have received it from the Caroline Divines of 1662. The appeal of the Anglican Reformers to a future General Council renders their action provisional, save with regard to the Creeds and Œcumenical Councils, from which they could not formally

Gabriel, the eulogy of S. Elisabeth, and the requirements of reason itself, is owing to a creature who was elevated to the position of Mother of Jesus Christ, and to whom even an Apostle was committed from the Cross as a child to its mother."

¹ In this matter the Caroline Divines set us a good example. Most of them were tinged with a strong bias against the Papal claims. But yet Bishop Andrewes, Bishop Hall, Bishop Jeremy Taylor, Archbishop Laud, Archbishop Bramhall, and that learned Cambridge Divine, Dr. Frank, with others that might be mentioned, honoured the Blessed Virgin and the Saints, in their published sermons and other works, with an outspoken veneration which is hardly ever taught publicly or practised in these days, even amongst those who call themselves Catholics.

dissent without ceasing to belong to the Catholic Church. The Archbishop of York (Dr. Maclagan) openly recognised this obvious fact when he said: "The temptation of our peculiar position is to self-complacency, and to a tacit assumption that we have attained to a *final* settlement of *belief* and *worship* on the basis of the Thirty-nine Articles and the Acts of Uniformity. The time may be approaching when we shall do wisely to review our position in matters of secondary importance, and to do this in no spirit of faithlessness or fear, but with the earnest desire to rise to the highest level of Christian thought and Christian life in our day." Speaking of the Reformation his Grace proceeds: "But after all, it was initiated and carried on by fallible men; and in the storm and stress of the sixteenth century they may sometimes have mistaken their course, and, perhaps, cast out too hastily some of the precious lading of the ship" (*Sermon at Norwich Church Congress, 1895*).

An English Archbishop has to measure his words very carefully on such an occasion as a Church Congress sermon. He may be attacked for his utterances by some Protestant peer, and have to answer for himself in the House of Lords, besides running the gauntlet of the usual type of Protestant controversial correspondence in the public press. Catholics may be thankful for the plain words of Archbishop Maclagan, which express the Anglican position with an open candour which at all events redeemed his utterance from the oft-quoted reproach, "*Episcopi Anglicani semper pavid*."

We need to "review our position" (to use the Archbishop's phrase) with regard to the Blessed Virgin and the Saints, "with the earnest desire to rise to the highest level of Christian thought," and we must also feel that the omission of Catholic and Primitive devotions to the Blessed Virgin and the Saints

Recognition of
this lack of
finality by
Archbishop
Maclagan.

A review of
the Anglican
position
necessary.

from our Public Worship is a sign of reaction which plainly shows that the Reformers "had mistaken their course, and cast out too hastily some of the precious lading of the ship." For the present we must accept this loss as a penalty for the sins of our forefathers, and rest upon the fact that our private devotions are not touched by this omission any more than it can touch our right to believe and teach what the Catholic Church has always believed and taught. The lack of *finality* in the doctrinal side of the Tudor Reformation was clearly expressed by the Archbishop of York in his allusion to the Articles, which, it must be remembered, concern the Clergy only, and do not bind the Laity. He was fortified in his remarks by the very significant

Attitude of
Lambeth Con-
ference of 1888
to the Thirty-
Nine Articles.

words of the Pastoral Letter set forth by the 145 Archbishops, Metropolitans, and Bishops of the Lambeth Conference of 1888. A Committee of the Conference had reported that

"the omission of a few clauses of the Articles would render the whole body free from any imputation of injustice or harshness towards those who differ from us. At the same time we feel that the Articles are not all of equal value, that they are not, and do not profess to be, a complete statement of Christian doctrine, and that from the temporary and local circumstances under which they were composed they do not always meet the circumstances of Churches founded under wholly different circumstances."

The Anglican Church in Japan had become organised under its own General Synod of Bishops, Clergy, and Laity, as the Colonial Churches are organised. It desired to repudiate certain of the controversial Articles of the Church of England, but at the same time wished to remain in communion with the See of Canterbury. Thus the question arose which forced the Lambeth Fathers in 1888 to face the question of the Thirty-nine Articles. The Pastoral Letter decided it as follows: "Quippe libertas quodammodo

The Blessed Virgin

ecclesiis per gentes paganas succrescentibus concedenda

The Lambeth
Encyclical of
1888 on the
Articles. est : neque enim *æquum foret* Triginta-novem
Articulos *integros* his imponi pro conditione

nobiscum communicandi utpote et verbis et
forma rerum temporumque indole et colore circa originem
primam affectos." The English form of the Letter is not so
graphic as the Latin. It is as follows : "A certain liberty of
treatment must be extended to native and growing Churches,
on which it would be unreasonable to impose, as conditions
of communion, the whole of the Thirty-nine Articles,
coloured as they are in language and form by the peculiar
circumstances under which they were originally drawn up."

It follows from this authoritative statement that a Province
of the Church, outside England itself, can be
Its decision
that a Province
can be in com-
munion with
Canterbury
without accept-
ing the whole
of the Articles. in lawful communion with the See of Canter-
bury without accepting the whole of the Thirty-
nine Articles. A great barrier to the ultimate
reunion of Christendom is thus swept away.

The 'Thirty-nine Articles,' "coloured as they are in
language and form by the peculiar circum-
Possibility of
revision of the
Articles by a
future Lambeth
Conference. stances under which they were originally
drawn up," can very well be altered and
modified now that those "peculiar circum-
stances" (namely, the condition of religion in England
under the Tudors) has passed away for ever. Of course
there are grave difficulties in the way of alteration. It is
obvious that the authority that originally imposed them
could not revise them *mero motu*. The Convocations of
Canterbury and York only represent the two ecclesiastical
Provinces of the Church of England, and have no authority
to legislate for the whole Anglican Communion. The only
possible way for an authoritative revision would seem to be:—

(i) A revision undertaken by the Archbishops, Metro-
politans, and Bishops of the whole Anglican Communion
in Council at Lambeth.

(ii) The subsequent acceptance of this revision by the Convocations of Canterbury and York, and by the General and Provincial Synods of the Churches in communion with Canterbury.

It is noteworthy, in this connection, that the Convocation of York did not formally accept the Thirty-nine Articles till 1605, whereas the Convocation of Canterbury accepted them as the Thirty-eight Articles of 1563, and finally revised them as the Thirty-nine Articles of 1571. It was considered apparently that the signatures of the Archbishop of York and the Bishops of Durham and Chester in 1563 carried with them the virtual consent of the Convocation of York. This was an obvious violation of ecclesiastical law, and the formal action of the Convocation of York in 1605 was needed to set the matter right. It is mentioned here as forming a precedent for a future acceptance of a revision

The Catholic interpretation of the Articles in conformity with the Canon of 1571. of the Articles, Province by Province. But, until such revision can take place, we must deal with the Articles as they stand at present.

They must be interpreted in accordance with the Catholic Faith which S. Gregory the Great taught, and sent S. Augustine to teach to our Pagan Saxon ancestors. Any other interpretation of the Articles would imply a breach of historic continuity in the "Ecclesia Anglicana," as Magna Charta terms it. The very Canon of the Convocation of 1571, which ordered the Clergy to subscribe to the Articles, requires all preachers to "see that they never teach aught in a sermon, to be religiously held and believed by the people, except what is agreeable (*consentaneum*) to the doctrine of the Old and New Testaments, and what the Catholic Fathers and ancient Bishops have collected from the same doctrine."¹ This carries with it the whole

¹ The Canon "De Concionatoribus" says: "Inprimis videbunt Concionatores nequid unquam doceant pro Concione quod a populo religiose teneri et credi velint, nisi quod consentaneum sit doctrinæ

Catholic position, and is evidence enough of the mind of the framers of the Articles, however much their language and form were coloured by the sordid details of the Tudor Reformation, which formed "the peculiar circumstances under which they were drawn up."¹ Sancta Clara on the Articles.

Clara therefore had every right to harmonise the Articles with the Faith as held by the Western Church. His famous Treatise was dedicated to King Charles I., and published in 1634. He was an English Franciscan,² and some of the English Roman Catholics attempted to procure the condemnation of his Treatise by the Holy See. But the effort failed, and the first attempt from the Roman side to interpret the Articles in a manner favourable to the reunion of Christendom remained without censure. This

Newman's Tract XC. Catholic interpretation of the Articles was practically adopted in Newman's Tract XC., and,

twenty years afterwards, formed the basis of the full and

Bp. A. Forbes and Dr. Gibson adopt the Catholic interpretation of the Articles. accurate theological treatment of the Articles by Bishop Forbes, of Brechin. It is recognised, on account of its historical and scientific accuracy, as the true basis of interpretation of several

crucial points, in Dr. Gibson's recent work on the Articles, and in other modern treatises of lesser bulk dealing with the same subject.

It may be thought that this somewhat long digression, dealing with the judgment of the Lambeth Conference on

Veteris et Novi Testamenti, quodque ex illa ipsa doctrina Catholici Patres et veteres Episcopi collegerint."

¹ A luminous exposition of those "peculiar circumstances" alluded to by the Lambeth Fathers of 1888 is to be found in Professor Maitland's contribution to the volume on the Reformation in the *Cambridge Modern History*.

² He was on friendly terms with Laud and Jeremy Taylor, and was one of the Chaplains of Queen Henrietta Maria. After the Restoration he became Chaplain to Queen Catharine of Braganza, and Provincial of the Franciscan Order in England.

the true position of the Articles, and with their legitimate Catholic interpretation, is *nihil ad rem*. But we must face

The current Protestant gloss on the Articles has no theological basis. facts. It is idle to deny that an erroneous and forced Protestant interpretation of the Articles has been current for about three hundred years, side by side with the Catholic interpretation.

There are persons still to be found in the Church of England who maintain that the "doctrina Romanensium" of Article XXII. means the decrees of the Council of Trent, and that any Invocation of Saints is thus forbidden by that Article. They also maintain that Article XXXV. on "The Homilies" fastens upon the Church of England the doctrine of the Homily on Prayer, which forbids alike the Invocation of Saints and Prayer for the Dead. It is for this reason that some words on the true position and Catholic interpretation of the Articles are necessary, in order that their Protestant interpretation, so far as it concerns the Invocation of Saints, may be disposed of at once, without interrupting the sequence of teaching in the subsequent chapters.

It is impossible to refer the words "doctrina Romanensium" in Article XXII. to the authoritative teaching of the Roman Church, as expressed in the Decrees of the Council of Trent. "But while any opinion, held in the

The "doctrina Romanensium" of Art. XXII. does not refer to Tridentine doctrine, in Dr. Pusey's opinion. Ancient Undivided Church, or by the Greek Church, cannot, on the ground of the language itself, be intended by the Article which speaks of the *Romish* doctrine, neither is there any ground to assume that the Article was directed against the canons of the Council of Trent. The Twenty-second Article was not drawn up with reference to the Council of Trent, *having been framed before it*" (Pusey, *Eirenicon*, i. p. 208). This Article was first drafted in 1553, when Protestant opinions were in the ascendant.

The Blessed Virgin

The words "doctrina scholasticorum" appeared instead of "doctrina Romanensium," and it included in its original draft, as signed by the six Royal Chaplains, a condemnation of the scholastic doctrine of Prayers for the Dead, which was struck out before its publication. If the Church of England had officially condemned the doctrine of "the Schoolmen" on the Invocation of Saints and Prayers for the Dead, it would have severed itself from the doctrine of the Catholic Church, anterior to the division of East and West. But the Protestant triumph under Edward VI. was but temporary. The Forty-two Articles of 1553 were carefully revised in 1563, and reduced in number to thirty-eight. Another Article was added in the final revision of 1571.

A most vital and significant change was made in Article XXII. The words "doctrina Romanensium" were substituted for "doctrina scholasticorum," and thus a condemnation of mediæval superstitions and abuses was substituted for a condemnation of the Catholic theology of S. Thomas Aquinas and other scholastic Divines, which formed the subsequent basis of the Decrees of Trent. The word "Romanenses" had at this date a definite technical meaning. It had been used as far back as 1520 by Luther and Ulrich von Hutten as a controversial term to designate an extreme mediæval party, whose extravagances and superstitions were justly restrained by the Council of Trent. The Puritans of Elizabeth's reign objected not only to the Catholic interpretation of the Thirty-nine Articles, but also to the anti-Calvinistic bias of the Articles themselves. The Nine Articles were the outcome of this Protestant revolt, and, though they were never imposed upon the Church of England, they were incorporated with

Original Protestant form of Article XXII. altered in 1563.

Significance of the change.

Meaning of "Romanenses."

Protestant objection to Articles resulted in Lambeth Articles, which were incorporated with Protestantised form of Thirty-nine Articles by Irish Church.

a Protestantised form of the Thirty-nine Articles, which was drawn up in 1615 by the Convocation of the Church of Ireland, and officially imposed on that Church. The Protestant authors of the Irish Articles knew very

well that the condemnation of the "Roman-
Change from "doctrina Romanensium" (Romish doctrine) to "doctrine of the Church of Rome" in Irish Articles.
enses" in the English Article would not serve their purpose. Accordingly they substituted for it the words "the doctrine of the Church of Rome," which of course expressed a definite condemnation of the *official* doctrine of the

Church of Rome, as expressed in the Tridentine Decrees. Happily for the Irish Church, these Protestantised Articles were superseded in 1634 by the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, by the influence of Bramhall, afterwards Archbishop of Armagh.

The meaning of "doctrina Romanensium" is thus placed beyond controversy.¹ It is of interest to note the opinion of a learned Roman Catholic theologian. Sancta Clara on Article XXII. Sancta Clara says: "It must be observed that, by the terms of this Article, it is not the Invocation of Saints *absolutely*, or in itself, that is condemned, but 'the Romish doctrine.'" After giving some instances of corrupt teaching he proceeds: "These wicked calumnies and fables of wicked men, under the name of '*Romish doctrine*,' they

¹ It is impossible to hold otherwise when we take Latimer's words into consideration. He says: "Take 'Saints' for inhabitants of Heaven, and 'worshipping them,' for praying to them, I never denied but that they might be worshipped and be our mediators, though not by way of redemption (for so Christ alone is a whole Mediator both for them and for us) yet by *way of intercession*" (quoted in Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*). We have also the similar opinion of Bishop W. Forbes (*Considerationes Modestæ*, vol. ii. p. 313) and also Thorndike's view (*Works*, vol. iv. part ii. p. 766), representing respectively the early and the closing period of the Caroline Divines. If these writers had held the current Protestant interpretation of "doctrina Romanensium" as forbidding all Invocation of Saints in the Anglican Church, they would not have written as they did.

reject as absurd; *we* detest them as supremely injurious to the Spouse of God" (*Sancta Clara On Thirty-nine Articles*, p. 40).

Bishop Forbes says: "People seemed to forget that besides the 'Romish doctrine' on these subjects there was a Catholic doctrine also; and that as formerly there had been danger from excess, there now was danger in defect in the way of suppressing important truths of the Gospel." He also says: "The Article cannot be strained into a condemnation of that which did not exist at the time (*i.e.* the Tridentine Decree), and we must come to the conviction that it was not the *formulised doctrine*, but a current and corrupt *practice* in the Latin or Western Church which is here declared to be vainly invented" (*inaniter conficta*) (Forbes *On Articles*, pp. 303-306).

Dr. Gibson says of Article XXII.: "With regard to the doctrines here condemned, it is important to bear in mind that when the Article was originally drawn up, and even when it was revised and republished in 1563, *none of them* had been considered by the Council of Trent. The Article cannot then have been deliberately aimed at the formal decrees of that Council" ¹ (Gibson *On Articles*, p. 538).

(ii) We have now to deal briefly with Article XXXV., which deals with the Homilies. It is enough to say that the Church of England is not bound by their doctrinal statements, and it is interesting to note that some of those statements are very dis-

¹ The late Dr. Hort was not biassed in favour of the Catholic interpretation of the Articles; yet he was constrained to admit that Article XXII. did not condemn Purgatory *as such*, but a *doctrina Romanensium* concerning it, by which he meant the extreme mediæval view such as Sir Thomas More and others put forth (see *Life and Letters of F. A. J. Hort, D.D.*, vol. ii. p. 336).

pleasing to Protestants.¹ The Homilies speak of Marriage and Holy Order as "Sacraments," and speak of the imposition of hands as "the visible sign" of Absolution. The condemnation of the Invocation of Saints and of Prayers for the Dead are of course a redressing of the balance. But Bishop Mountagu said the plain truth about the Homilies in 1625 in his *Appello Cæsarem*: "I willingly admit the Homilies as containing certain godly and wholesome exhortations; but *not* as the *public dogmatical resolutions* of the Church of England."

The seventeenth-century Expositions of the Articles by Bishop Burnet and Bishop Beveridge take practically the same view, which was confirmed by Sir H. J. Fust, Dean of Arches, in the famous case "*Brecks v. Woolfrey*," when the Homily "on Prayer" was cited as an authority against the lawfulness of prayer for the dead. The Dean of Arches said that "it is not necessarily to be inferred that the Church of England adopted every part of the doctrines of the Homilies," and gave judgment in favour of the lawfulness of prayers for the dead in the Church of England, which was the only possible view to take of the facts and circumstances bearing upon it.

We have now finally disposed of any arguments against the Invocation of Saints to be derived from the authority (*quantum valeat*) of the Articles of the Church of England, and we may close this portion of the subject by stating that the earlier teaching of the Anglican Reformers upon the Invocation of Saints is in practical harmony with Article XXII., and,

¹ Dr. Pusey's statement concerning the words "under the form of Bread and Wine," as being the words "of the Church of England," is not affected by the unauthoritative character of the Homilies. These words are *authoritative*, as being the formal expression of the Church upon the subject-matter of a future Homily to deal with the Holy Eucharist as defined by them.

further, that it has never been superseded or repealed by later formularies. It seems clear that the Re-
Reformers' use of the word "Invocation." formers meant by their use of the word "Invocation" in Article XXII., as well as in earlier formularies, a form of the "doctrina Romanensium" whereby the Saints were directly asked for gifts which God alone can give, an abuse forbidden by the Catechism of the Council of Trent.¹ Cardinal Bellarmine takes the same view: "It is not lawful," he says, "to seek from the Saints that they, as *authors* of Divine benefits, would grant glory or grace, or other means to beatitude."²

The earlier Anglican formularies are quite explicit upon this point, whilst at the same time they clearly express the Catholic doctrine of the Invocation of Saints. The "Ten Articles" of 1536 were drawn up and sanctioned by Convocation. They were issued with the signatures of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, sixteen other Bishops, and fifty members of the Lower House.

Article VIII. says: "As touching Praying to Saints, We will that all Bishops and Preachers shall instruct and teach our people committed by us unto their spiritual charge, that albeit grace, remission of sin and Salvation, cannot be obtained but of God only by the mediation of our Saviour Christ, Which is only sufficient Mediator for our sins; yet it is very laudable to pray to Saints in Heaven everlastingly living, whose charity is ever permanent, to be intercessors

¹ Non enim eodem modo Deum et sanctos imploramus. Nam precamur Deum ut ipse vel bona det vel liberet a malis, a sanctis autem, quia gratiosi sunt apud Deum petimus ut nostri patrocinium suscipiant, ut nobis a Deo impetrent ea quorum indigemus (*Cat. Conc. Trid.* vi. 3-4).

² Non licet a sanctis petere ut nobis tanquam auctores divinorum beneficiorum gloriam, vel gratiam, aliaque ad beatitudinem media concedant (*De Sanct. Beat.* i. 17).

and to pray for us unto Almighty God after this manner : All Holy Angels and Saints in Heaven pray for us, and with us unto the Father, that for His dear Son Jesus Christ's sake, we may have grace of Him, and remission of our sins . . . And in this manner we may pray to our Blessed Lady, to S. John Baptist, to all and every of the Apostles, or any other saint particularly as our devotion doth serve us, so that it be done without any vain superstition, as to think that any saint is more merciful, or will hear us sooner than Christ, or that any saint doth serve for one thing more than another as patron of the same."

In 1540 a Commission consisting of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, six Bishops, and twelve Doctors was appointed to draw up a doctrinal statement. In 1543 it was published, with the approval of Convocation, under the title of "the Necessary Doctrine and Erudition The "Necessary Doctrine." for any Christian man." In commenting upon the Third Commandment, it ordered the Bishops and Preachers to teach the people "that (forasmuch as the gifts of health of body, health of soul, forgiveness of sins, the gift of grace, or life everlasting, and such other, be the gifts of God, *and cannot be given but by God*) whosoever maketh *invocation* to saints for these gifts, praying to them for any of the said gifts, or such like (which cannot be given but by God only) yieldeth the glory of God to His creature, contrary to this commandment. Nevertheless *to pray to Saints to be intercessors with us and for us* to our Lord for our suits which we make to Him, and for such things as we can obtain of none but Him, so that we esteem not, or worship not them as givers of those gifts, but as intercessors for the same, *is lawful and allowed by the Catholic Church.*"

In 1544 Archbishop Cranmer revised the old Litanies, and reduced the Invocations in the first English The revised Litany of 1544. Litany to the following ;—

The Blessed Virgin

“Saint Mary, Mother of God our Saviour Jesus Christ, pray for us.”

“All Holy Angels and Archangels, and all holy orders of blessed spirits, pray for us.”

“All Holy Patriarchs and Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors and Virgins, and all the blessed Company of Heaven, pray for us.”

The subsequent omission of these invocations from the Public Worship of the Church of England proves nothing against the *doctrines* taught in the formularies of 1536 and 1543, which have never been withdrawn or superseded.¹ The parallel omission of the Form for the Anointing of the

Omission of
public invoca-
tions no pro-
hibition of
their private
use.

Sick has not hindered a certain number of the Anglican Bishops from using their *ius liturgicum* to restore to their Dioceses the Sacrament of Unction. Nor would the loss of invocations in the Public Services deter an Anglican Bishop from putting forth private Offices containing them for the use of Guilds and Confraternities in his Diocese, if he deemed it expedient.

We now proceed to prove that the Anglican teaching, as expressed in the “*Necessary Doctrine*,” is in harmony with the teaching of Eastern and Western Christendom.

Harmony of
Anglican doc-
trine with the
teaching of
East and West.

The decree of the Council of Trent on the Invocation of Saints is in practical accordance with the Anglican formularies of 1536 and 1543. It declares that, “The Saints reigning together with Christ offer their prayers to God on behalf of men,

The decree of
Trent.

¹ *Palmer on the Church* is a well-known, if somewhat old-fashioned, defence of the Anglican position. He maintains that the Thirty-nine Articles of 1562 were in general accord with the “*Necessary Doctrine*,” etc., set forth in 1543 (vol. i. pp. 523-525). If there are any controversialists bold enough to suggest that the doctrinal Formularies of the reign of Henry VIII. have been withdrawn, let them point to some official action of the Church of England to that effect. They will seek for it in vain.

and it is *good and profitable* to invoke them as suppliants, and to take refuge in their prayers, support, and help, on account of the benefits to be obtained from God through His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, Who is our Only Redeemer and Saviour.”¹

Decree VIII. of the Synod of Jerusalem (commonly called the Council of Bethlehem), A.D. 1672, represents the faith of the Eastern Church. It is as follows: “We believe our Lord Jesus Christ to be the only *Mediator*, and that, in giving Himself a ransom for all, He hath, through His own Blood, made a reconciliation between God and Man, and that Himself having a care for His own, is Advocate and propitiation for our sins. Nevertheless, in prayers and supplications unto Him, we say that the Saints are Intercessors, and above all the Immaculate Mother of Him Who is God the Word; the Holy Angels too—whom we know to be set over us—the Apostles, Prophets, Martyrs, and all the Saints whom He hath glorified as having served Him faithfully.”²

The Russian Bishop Macarius teaches the same doctrine as Cardinal Bellarmine and the Anglican Reformers, when he says: “In venerating the Saints as the faithful servants

¹ Docentes eos, sanctos una cum Christo regnantes, orationes suas pro hominibus Deo offerre: *bonum atque utile* esse suppliciter eo invocare, et ob beneficia impetranda a Deo per Filium Eius Iesum Christum Dominum nostrum. Qui solus noster Redemptor et Salvator est, ad eorum orationes, opem, auxiliumque confugere” (*Conc. Trid. Sess. xxv. De invocatione*, etc.).

² Πιστεύομεν τὸν Κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν μόνον μεσίτην γεγονέναι, καὶ δόντα ἑαυτὸν λύτρον περὶ πάντων, τὴν καταλλαγὴν διὰ τοῦ ἰδίου αἵματος πεποιηκέναι ἀνάμεσον Θεοῦ καὶ ἀνθρώπων, καὶ αὐτὸν κήδομενον τῶν ἰδίων εἶναι παράκλητον καὶ ἱλασμόν περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν. Ἐν ταῖς πρὸς αὐτὸν μέντοι ἐντεύξεσι καὶ αἰτήσεσιν εἶναι πρεσβεύτας τοὺς ἁγίους φαμέν, καὶ πρὸ πάντων τὴν πανάχραντον Μητέρα αὐτοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου, τοὺς τε ἁγίους Ἀγγέλους, οὓς καὶ προσταοῦντας ἡμῶν οἶδαμεν, Ἀποστόλους, προφῆτας, μάρτυρας, ὁσίους καὶ πάντας οὓς Ἐκεῖνος ἐδόξασεν ὡς πιστοὺς αὐτοῦ θεράποντας.

The Blessed Virgin

of God, as His just ones, and His special friends, the Holy Church invokes them in her prayers, *not as gods capable of giving us any assistance by their own power*, but as intercessors with God the Only Author and Dispenser of every gift and of all grace for all creatures (Bishop Macarius, *Théologie Dogmatique Orthodoxe*, tom. ii. pp. 660 *et seqq.*).

We have now seen that Rome, Constantinople, and Canterbury are in agreement upon the general principles of our relation to the Blessed Virgin and the Saints. So we may say that all Catholics are agreed:—

(i) That the reverence due to the Blessed Virgin and the Saints is parted from the worship we owe to Almighty God by the impassable gulf which separates the honour due to the creature from the honour due to the Creator.

(ii) That the Blessed Virgin and the Saints intercede for us, and that for us to invoke their prayers “is not derogatory to the Honour of the Only Mediator between God and Man, Christ Jesus” (*Conc. Trid. Sess. xxv.*).

(iii) That we look not to them as the source of God’s gifts, or “as capable of giving us assistance by their own power,” but as “intercessors for the same” (*Necessary Doctrine*, etc., 1543).

The root-fact of the Incarnation is the sole basis of all our prayers for the intercessions of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Saints. By it we become citizens of the Household of God. As branches of the True Vine we are linked in fellowship with Angels and Archangels, and with the Blessed Virgin and the Saints in glory.

The Angels “*rejoice over one sinner that repenteth*,” and the Saints share in their joy, as they see the victories of the Church Militant reflected in the mirror of the Vision of God. In the “Communion of Saints” we are knit together,

as members of Christ, in a holy fellowship of prayers and intercessions with the Blessed Mother of God, and with "the spirits of just men made perfect," which binds the Church Triumphant, the Church Expectant, and the Church Militant into the unity of the Body of Christ. The Prayers

Our Communion with the Blessed Virgin, the Holy Angels, and the Saints in Glory.

of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints in glory rise up to the Eternal Throne in the heavenly Incense of the Apocalyptic Vision. The office of the Angel of the Incense shows that the Angels also help our prayers (Rev. viii. 3-4).¹ This mighty volume of Prayer rises incessantly on behalf of the Church Militant corporately, and for its individual members, and also for those waiting souls who are being cleansed from all earthly stains and developed in spiritual growth by the full consciousness of Redeeming Love in the Church Expectant. To these intercessions the Church Militant unites her prayers when she offers the Holy Sacrifice of the Altar to the Eternal Father for the living in their pilgrimage and for the faithful departed. The words "all Thy whole Church" in our Liturgy, as Bishop Cosin has said, teach the width of our communion and fellowship with the Church Triumphant and the Church Expectant.

There is One Mediator, and the gulf between the Mediation and Intercession of our "Merciful and Faithful High Priest" (Heb. ii. 17) and the intercessions of the

¹ The Mass of the Western Church "prays that the Angel of the Lord may take the Oblation from the visible Altar, and bear it to the Highest Heaven—to the Invisible Altar, before the shrine of the Divine Majesty" (Duchesne, *Christian Worship*, p. 182). "Supplices Te rogamus, Omnipotens Deus, iube hæc perferri per manus sancti Angeli Tui in sublime Altare Tuum, in conspectu Divinæ Maiestatis Tuæ, ut quotquot ex hac Altaris participatione sacrosanctum Filii Tui corpus et sanguinem sumpserimus, omni benedictione cœlesti repleamur." This part of the Canon is very ancient, according to Mgr. Duchesne's judgment, and occupies the place of the Greek ἐπικλησις.

Blessed Virgin and the Saints, as Members of His Body the Church, is infinite and impassable. "There
 The One Mediator. *is none other Name under Heaven whereby we must be saved*" (Acts iv. 12), and in His Name are offered the intercessions of His Blessed Mother, and of the Saints who stand nearest to His Throne, just as our imperfect prayers in the Church Militant are offered "through Jesus Christ our Lord." Our prayers for these intercessions are offered in our Lord's Name, as the ancient Collects for the Festivals of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints abundantly testify,¹ and this fact is the true safeguard against all those exaggerations of devotion which Cardinal Newman so forcibly discouraged.²

As the root-fact of the Incarnation is the basis of all Catholic teaching upon the subject of Invocation, so is it

¹ "The intercession of the Saints, as well as the corresponding invocation of that intercession on our part, is so far from impairing the merits of Christ that it is merely an effect of the same—a fruit of His all-Atoning Power that again united Heaven and Earth. This our ecclesiastical prayers very beautifully and strikingly express, as they all, without exception (even such wherein we petition the benign influence of the celestial inhabitants on our earthly pilgrimage), are addressed in the Redeemer's Name. Moreover, if the intercession of the Saints interfere with the mediatorial office of Christ, then must all intercession, and prayer for intercession, even among the living, be absolutely rejected" (Möhler, *Symbolism*, part liii. p. 358).

² Bishop Andrewes draws a distinction between "*Ora pro nobis*," which he allows, and direct prayer for blessings and gifts, to which he objects: "They say to the Blessed Virgin '*Sancta Maria*,' not only '*Ora pro nobis*,' but '*accipe quod offerimus, dona quod rogamus, Tu confer vitam*'; more than which cannot be said to God Himself" (answer to Cardinal Perron's reply, pp. 76-80). But it must be here noted that the Tridentine decree forbids what the Bishop deprecates. "Unde nec sacerdos dicere solet offero tibi sacrificium, Petre vel Paule, sed Deo de illorum victoriis gratias agens, eorum patrocinia implorat, ut ipsi pro nobis intercedere dignentur in coelis, quorum memoriam facimus in terris" (*Concil. Trident. Sess. xxv.*).

the only true basis of the veneration and honour due to

the Blessed Virgin and the Saints.

The Incarnation is the true basis of our veneration for the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Saints.

The following chapters will deal mainly with that unique and mysterious relation subsisting between our Lord Jesus Christ and His Blessed Mother, which is founded on His Incarnate Life. What the Catholic Church has taught and believed with regard to this relation, and its direct and indirect consequences, will be carefully examined. Our true relation, as Members of Christ, with the Blessed Virgin will be treated with greater fulness than our relation with the Saints, for in this subject the greater includes the less. Besides which, it is unnecessary to cover again the ground which has been already covered in that masterpiece of English Theology, Bishop Forbes *On the Articles*. His treatment of the patristic witness to the Invocation of Saints renders it unnecessary to do more than refer readers to his book, and to the fact that Dr. Pusey was his fellow-workman in dealing with Article XXII. (*Dr. Pusey's Life*, vol. iv. p. 146).

The devotional aspect of the life of the Blessed Virgin has been already treated with much force and beauty in Canon Liddon's "Magnificat," and in Bishop Hall's meditations on "The Virgin Mother." There are difficulties in dealing with the vast devotional literature on this subject which are beyond the compass of a single small volume. It would be impossible, moreover, to deal with this devotional literature without touching points of controversy, and the aim of the writer is to harmonise and explain differences of view rather than to accentuate them.¹

¹ Austin's *Devotions* is an old-fashioned book which was much used by Anglicans at the close of the Caroline period. It contains "Offices of the Blessed Virgin," which are models of sound Catholic devotion, and which are absolutely free from expressions unreal to sober minds. It has passed through several editions, and its best form is the edition of 1869, with a preface by the late Dr. Littledale.

The Blessed Virgin

It is from this standpoint that he desires to treat the authorised doctrine and belief of Catholics in communion with Rome regarding the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It would be easy to produce a catena of authorities adverse to this belief, from S. Anselm and S. Thomas Aquinas down to the present day. But if words for peace are to be true to their professed intention, it is the office of a peacemaker so to explain this belief as to reconcile it with other truths which the Church has always held and taught. The Dominican theology on this subject can never be revived, and so cautious an Anglican as the late Dean Church said that "the dogma itself is an opinion which any one might hold, if he thinks that there are materials in the world from which to form an opinion about it" (Church, *Occasional Papers*, i. 354). In 1874 the late Dr. Döllinger presided at the Bonn Conference of Old Catholics, Easterns, and Anglicans, when certain doctrinal propositions were considered with a view to a unity which would primarily take shape apart from the Holy See. The Temporal Power had then recently fallen, and both Dr. Döllinger and Mr. Gladstone at that date believed that the Vatican decrees presaged the downfall of the spiritual and moral power of the Papacy. It needed great foresight and courage for any Anglican member of that famous Conference to withstand Dr. Döllinger upon such a subject as his resolution condemning the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. Yet Canon Liddon was bold enough to move an amendment to Dr. Döllinger's resolution, which, though unsuccessful, obtained nine supporters. If so eminent a theologian as Canon Liddon felt, with Dean Church, that the doctrine in question "was an opinion which any one might hold," he must have believed it capable of an explanation which he, as a loyal Anglican, could accept.¹ The present writer is

¹ Although he took this line in 1874, we do not desire to forget that

convinced that such an explanation is practicable without undue strain upon our present formularies, and, at all events, he does not desire to be wiser in the matter than Dean Church and Canon Liddon.

On other points it is necessary to be equally cautious in rejecting beliefs that may be explained without conflicting with "the Faith once delivered to the Saints," and the wider interests of Catholic reunion involve a line of reconciliation and explanation which will be open to the criticism of those who consider that the Tudor Reformation has set up the perfect ideal of the Church Catholic and Primitive. Persons who are ready to make unbounded concessions and explanations to the Eastern Church on the subject of the "Filioque" clause in the Nicene Creed, ought to be equally ready to consider explanations of the doctrines of the Western Church. On the other hand, there are some who seek reunion with the Protestant sects upon the basis of discarding Nicene Christianity. These cannot consistently condemn persons who seek the reunion of Christendom on a Catholic basis, without forfeiting their title to a charity and breadth of view which they are ready enough to claim, but which too often appears to extend only in one direction.

The paramount necessity for all Catholics is peace and unity through the truth, and this can only be won by explanations that reconcile rather than by rigid polemics which accentuate our unhappy divisions.

Canon Liddon, in the appendix to his Bampton Lectures of 1866, quotes Cardinal de Turrecremata's work, upholding the opposite view, which was prepared to be laid before the Council of Basle in 1439. Dr. Schaff says that Canon Liddon viewed the doctrine as "a pious opinion" (*Creeds of Christendom*, p. 549).

CHAPTER I.

THE PREDESTINATION AND SINLESSNESS OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

“Our tainted nature’s solitary boast.”—WORDSWORTH, *Eccl. Sonnets*.

THE Predestination of the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the “Mother of Jesus Christ our Lord and God” (Prayer Book of 1549), is of necessity included in the Predestination of the Incarnate Life of the Son Who is “the Word of the Father, Very and Eternal God” (Article II.). It is reasonable therefore to believe that there is a “Protevangelium” of the Incarnation in the Eternal Purpose of God, which may be considered to envelop and include the Promise to the Seed of the Woman after the Fall (Gen. iii. 15). One of the most remarkable theological developments of the latter half of the nineteenth century in England has been the revival of the Scotist Theology upon the relation of the Incarnation to the Fall of Man. The centre of this revival has been the Cambridge School of Divinity, and its foremost and most distinguished advocate was the late Bishop Westcott of Durham, whose essay on “the Gospel of Creation” is the most lucid of all modern expositions of the Scotist doctrine of the Incarnation.¹

The Predestination of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Revival of Scotist Theology.

Bishop Westcott's *Gospel of Creation*.

¹ Archbishop Trench's *Five Sermons preached before the University of Cambridge* take the same view, and are worth careful study.

Blessed Virgin and Company of Heaven. 29

The influence of this essay has permeated religious thought in various directions.

Dr. Hastings, the eminent Presbyterian divine, has not hesitated to admit the following passage into his *Dictionary of the Bible*. "The cosmic significance of the Incarnation, and the view that it was eternally purposed, seems indeed to be implied in such passages as Eph. i. 4-10, and possibly in Heb. ii. 10, passages which seem to suggest that the Incarnation of the Son was an event predestined before the foundation of the world. The universe may well, so far as human reason can judge, have been framed with a view to the Incarnation of its Creator. When, however, the question is raised whether this event was predestined in view of man's foreseen fall, Scriptural testimony fails us, and we are left to the consideration whether it is *a priori* probable that God would have made His Highest Gift to His creatures contingent on human transgression. On the other hand the evolutionary movement, whether in physical nature or in human history, which tends towards a fulness of time (Gal. iv. 4 ; cf. Eph. i. 10), seems unaccountably to fail unless crowned by the appearance of One Who is the flower of human kind, and whose coming marks a climax in revelation" (Hastings' *Dict. of Bible*, vol. ii. p. 465).

These remarkable words express the serious difficulty of the Thomist theory, which makes the Incarnation depend upon the Fall of Man. S. Thomas at first hesitated in his view, but finally adopted the opinion that sin may have caused the Incarnation.¹ In this he did not follow Albert the Great in

Difficulty of the Thomist view of the Incarnation as dependent on the Fall.

¹ "Unde cum in sacra Scriptura ubique Incarnationis ratio ex peccato primi hominis assignetur, convenientius dicitur Incarnationis opus ordinatum esse a Deo in remedium contra peccatum ; ita quod peccato non existente, Incarnatio non fuisset . . . Deus enim permittit mala fieri, ut inde aliquid melius eliciat, unde dicitur (Rom. v. 20), *Ubi abundavit delictum, superabundavit et gratia*. Unde et dicitur, *O felix culpa*," etc. (*Summa* III., Q. 1, Art. 3).

condemning the crude logic of certain hymns, in which the *actual sin* of our first parents is called a blessed thing because it caused the Incarnation !

These are the words of the Sequence blamed by Albert :—

O culpa nimium beata
Qua redempta est natura :
Deus Qui creavit omnia
Nascitur ex femina.

There are also the words of the hymn for blessing the Paschal candle : “O felix culpa, quæ tantum ac talem meruit habere Redemptorem,” which S. Thomas himself quotes without criticism. The logical Latin mind immediately seized upon the idea that, if so marvellous a blessing as the Incarnation resulted from the Fall, therefore the act of *sin* was blessed, which, in causing the Fall, caused also the Incarnation.

Well may Albert the Great, the master who taught S. Thomas, call the language of these hymns “*locutiones valde improprie.*” The whole idea of a *felix culpa* is unthinkable and impossible, when we realise what sin is in the sight of God. To quote once more the words cited above, we cannot possibly consider it to be “*a priori* probable that God would have made the Highest Gift to His Creatures contingent on human *transgression.*”

Bishop Westcott’s reverent caution in dealing with the subject is beyond praise. He begins by quoting the words of Nachianti, Bishop of Chiozza, one of the Tridentine theologians, who prefaces his argument in favour of the Scotist view with the words : “If we essay something without presumption and in submission to the judgment of the Church, and supported by the Light of the Divine Word give expression to our thoughts humbly, to the best of our power, with stammering lips, not only do

Albert the
Great.

Bishop West-
cott’s advocacy
of Scotism.

we not offend God, but we do Him reverence and not unfrequently profit the weaker members of the Church" (Nachianti, *Op.* p. 37).

"In this spirit," proceeds Bishop Westcott, "we must attempt to define our meaning when we express our belief that the true Protevangelium is to be found in the revelation of Creation, or, in other words, that the Incarnation was independent of the Fall.¹

All our present ideas of human life necessarily involve thoughts of pain and suffering and weakness. Such thoughts are wholly excluded from the conception of that Manhood which we regard as predestined in the eternal and absolute counsel of God for union with the Word, or (to look at it from the other side) as answering to Him of Whom it was, in some sense which we cannot strictly define, the Image, related as a copy to the archetype. We follow this progress to its consummation; and then, having so gained a conception of manhood answering to what is made known of the Divine idea of man, we go on to say that it is most consonant to what God has revealed to

The original purpose of the Incarnation viewed as the union of God the Son with sinless humanity.

believe that it was His pleasure that humanity, so consummated in its proper development in many parts, should find its true personality by union with His Son. According to this view, man's selfwill by which he fell was not the occasion of the supreme manifestation of the Love of God in '*the taking of the manhood into God.*' That

¹ We may trace the germ of this teaching in the *Acts of S. Callistratus*, which modern criticism assigns to A.D. 300. "Nor let one of you say that He was merely God, or merely Man, but rather that He is God and Man—God in the flesh, and Man in His Godhead, not confounded or changed. For He says in the Proverbs: '*When He made ready His Throne I was with Him . . . I it was with Whom He was rejoicing.*' But with regard to the flesh He says that the mystery of the Incarnation of Christ was *before the world came into being*" (*Monuments of Early Christianity*, Conybeare, p. 397).

was the end of Creation from the beginning. *The Fall*, and here lies the greatest mystery of Divine love, *did not frustrate this end*" (Westcott, *Epistles of S. John*, pp. 286, 287).

We here trace the Scotist idea of the Incarnation as predestined for a certain end from all eternity. That end, for which humanity was created, was the union of sinless humanity with the Divine Logos. Man, for that end, was

The Fall did not hinder the original purpose of the Incarnation.

created in God's image to progress towards God's likeness, and ultimately to be joined with God in the Word made flesh. The Fall did not frustrate this union of God the Son with

The union of the Godhead with sinless humanity accomplished in the fulfilment of the Predestination of the Blessed Virgin Mary, as the Second Eve, to be the Θεοτόκος.

sinless and unstained humanity. All that the malice of the Serpent could work was the "bruising of the heel" of the Word Incarnate, the Divine Seed of the Woman, by the humiliations of His life on earth, the Agony, the Cross, and the Grave. The union of the Word with sinless humanity was not frustrated by the Fall, for the Scotist theology includes the fulfilment of the Predestination of the Blessed Virgin Mary as the Second Eve—sinless as Eve unfallen—to be the Θεοτόκος. The evolution of humanity, as the writer in Hastings' *Dictionary* says, "seems unaccountably to fail, unless

crowned by the appearance of One Who is the flower of human kind," and the Fall of man was not permitted to mar this "taking of the manhood into God." We are so accustomed by the consequences of the Fall to associate sin, sorrow, pain, and weakness with human life that we cannot realise that "such thoughts" (to use Bishop Westcott's words) "are wholly excluded from the conception of that manhood which we regard as predestined in the Eternal and Absolute Counsel of God for union with the Word."

We may thus regard the Predestination of the Blessed

Virgin and her subsequent Redemption from sin as fulfilling this Divine Ideal.

The Divine Ideal of sinless humanity fulfilled in the Redemption of the Blessed Virgin from sin.

To the Primitive Church she is the Second Eve. As a pure Virgin she conceives the Eternal Word by the Power of the Holy Ghost. His Birth is no less miraculous than His Conception.

She is miraculously exempt from the "pain and peril of childbirth" which forms part of the curse laid upon Eve

Her special privileges.

fallen. As S. Leo says, the Blessed Virgin "ita salva virginitate edidit, quemadmodum salva virginitate concepit" (tome C. ii.),—an expression of the

physical mystery and miracle of our Lord's Birth that comes to us with the twofold authority of S. Leo's position and that of the Council of Chalcedon. The whole Catholic Church is agreed on the subject of her sinlessness, and has

S. Augustine on her sinlessness.

practically adopted the well-known words of S. Augustine, when he declared that all have sinned "except the Holy Virgin Mary, concerning whom, for the honour of our Lord, I wish no question at all to be raised when we are treating of sins."¹

We have briefly enumerated the special privileges of the

Her redemption from original sin.

Blessed Virgin, and reserve at this stage certain of them for fuller treatment. But this rapid survey shows that it is natural to regard her as

fulfilling Bishop Westcott's ideal of a humanity of a type from which sin and suffering *per se* as the ordinary consequences of the Fall are "wholly excluded."

The Fall and its consequences involved the Word Incarnate in the unknown sorrows of His Cross and

¹ "Excepta itaque sancta Virgine Maria, de qua propter honorem Domini nullam prorsus, cum de peccatis agitur, haberi volo quæstionem" (*De Nat. et Grat.* cap. xxxvi.). The passage is all the more remarkable, because S. Augustine is denouncing as Pelagian the idea of the sinlessness of Enoch, Elijah, Daniel, S. Joseph, and the Apostle S. John.

Passion. But He reigned a Victor from the Tree of Shame, and the glory of His Manhood, as the Second Adam, was made perfect through suffering. The Passion of our Lord and the humiliations of His life on earth touched His Blessed Mother. The Second Eve became the "Mater dolorosa."¹ But suffering of this kind in one so pure and holy does not remove her from the fulfilment of Bishop Westcott's ideal of that humanity which was eternally predestined to be united with God the Son, or hinder her from being the person chosen from all eternity out of the human race, and redeemed from original sin at her conception, so that she answered "to what is made known of the Divine idea in man."

It is time now to examine the Scotist teaching upon the sinlessness of the Blessed Virgin. Duns Scotus, A.D. 1307, says: "God was able to bring about that she was never in original sin; He was also able to bring about that she should be for one instant only in sin; He was also able to bring about that she should be for some time in sin, and at the end of that time should be cleansed from it. . . . Now which of these three, which have been shown to be possible, actually happened, God knows; if not opposed to the authority of the Church, or the authority of Scripture, it seems probably right to assign to Mary that which is more excellent."²

¹ The following thoughtful words are penned by a modern Presbyterian divine. "From the Cross Jesus committed His Mother to the care of John, asking the Virgin to see in John another son who would take His place till Mary and Jesus met in the Father's House. It is likely that at least that most sympathetic and tenderest of men withdrew her, who has fitly been called 'Our Lady of Sorrows,' from the scene that could only break a mother's heart" (Watson, *Life of the Master*, p. 290). We may note here that the best authorities believe that the Blessed Virgin Mary remained by the Cross to the end.

² "Deus potuit facere quod ipsa nunquam fuisset in peccato originali; potuit etiam fecisse ut tantum in uno instanti esset in peccato; potuit

In another passage he speaks more positively, and says : "The Virgin Mother of God was never actually hostile by reason of actual sin, nor by original sin (yet she would have been if she had not been preserved from it)" (Sent. III. xviii. 1 (13)).

Here is the point. It seems unthinkable to believe that the Virgin Mother was ever "hostile to her Divine Son by reason of sin, original or actual," and the thought of the Incarnation, as independent of the Fall, in God's Eternal Purpose, carries with it the included idea of the instrument of the Incarnation being rendered independent of the Fall, by a special act of our Lord's Redeeming Love, so that the original idea of the Incarnation, as a union between God the Son and sinless humanity, should not be frustrated by Satan.¹

The history of this Scotist doctrine of the Immunity of the Blessed Virgin from original sin may be briefly traced. We certainly find it in the words of S. Ambrose, who describes the Blessed Virgin as "a Virgin by grace, *entirely free from every stain of sin (per gratiam, ab omni integra labe peccati)*" (In Ps. cxviii., Serm. xxii. 30). There are other patristic references besides the important passage from S. Augustine we have already

etiam facere ut per tempus aliquod esset in peccato et in ultimo illius temporis purgaretur. . . . Quod autem horum trium quæ ostensa sunt possibilia factum sit Deus novit : si auctoritati Ecclesiæ vel auctoritati Scripturæ non repugnet videtur probabile quod excellentius attribuere Mariæ (*Duns Scotus*, Sent. III. iii. 1 (9)).

¹ We may put the matter tersely thus : The Blessed Virgin was created by God to be *Θεοτόκος*. In His miraculous Conception and Birth from her, He freed her *body* from the consequences and penalties of sin that attend an ordinary human conception and birth. Why should God permit His Mother to be hostile to Him through original sin? Is it not reasonable that God should free her *entirely* from original sin, and redeem her *soul* from its consequences, even as He redeemed her *body* from the curse of Eve?

quoted, although, like the Scotist view of the Incarnation, this opinion was not prominent in the Early Church.¹ But the fact that it was not prominent is no evidence against it, if we believe in the progressive evolution of the teaching of the Church, which is a belief entirely consistent with the completeness of "the Faith once delivered to the Saints."

There is, of course, a weighty chain of authorities against the Scotist view, which is set forth in Pusey's *Eirenicon* (vol. i. p. 177), and which includes the names of S. Anselm, S. Bernard, S. Peter Damian, P. Lombard, S. Thomas Aquinas, and his master Albert the Great. All, however, were agreed upon the sanctification of the Blessed Virgin *before her birth* (which was true in a lesser degree of Jeremiah and S. John Baptist), and upon her subsequent immunity from sin. The University of Paris upheld the Scotist view, which was also adopted by the Franciscans, whilst the Dominicans upheld the opinion of their own great theologian, S. Thomas Aquinas.

In 1439 the Council of Basle (Sess. xxxvi.) decreed that

¹ It is a curious fact that the Koran contains a witness to this teaching, according to its commentators, who must have borrowed from Christian documents, or traditions, accessible to them, as Mahomet does in the account of the Annunciation, which also appears in the Koran. The tainted source of this testimony does not diminish its value. Mahomet's commentators could not have *originated* the idea which they express in commenting as follows on the prayer of Anna at the birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary: "I have called her Mary, and I commend her to Thy protection, and also her issue, against Satan. . . . Then the Lord accepted her with a gracious acceptance" (*Koran*, sur. iii., Sale's ed.). Jallalo'ddin's comment is that God placed a *veil* between Mary and her Son, and the Evil Spirit, so that he could not touch them. For this reason *neither of them were guilty of sin, like the rest of the children of Adam*. Al Beidawi and Kitada have the same comment on God's answer to Anna's prayer. The Mahomedan idea of original sin is that the Devil touches every one at his birth.

“the glorious Virgin Mary, Mother of God, by the anticipating and operating special grace of Divine Council of Basle, A.D. 1439. Power, was never actually subject to original sin, but was always immune from all original and actual sin, and both holy and undefiled.”¹

The Council of Basle has been of doubtful authority in the West. But its decree on the Immunity of the Blessed Virgin caused the University of Paris to take up the matter more warmly, and to exact a belief in the Immunity from all its Doctors. The controversy between the Dominicans and Franciscans on the subject, as representing the Council of Trent. Thomist and Scotist schools, continued until the Council of Trent, whose decree on “Original Sin” declared that the Council had no intention of including therein the Blessed Virgin.²

From this date the Dominican Theology declined in influence, and the Scotist view became more and more predominant, until Gregory XVI. in 1840 admitted the word “immaculata” into the Mass for the Festival of the Conception (December 8th); and allowed the words “Regina, sine labe originali concepta,” to be inserted in a litany of the Blessed Virgin.

When Pius IX., in the Decree “Ineffabilis Deus,” proclaimed the Immaculate Conception on December 8th, 1854, he was practically the mouthpiece of the whole of Latin Christendom. A study of the replies of the Bishops, when the question was referred to them, proves this

¹ “Gloriosam virginem Dei genitricem Mariam, præveniente et operante Divini Numinis gratia singulari, nunquam actualiter subiacuisse originali peccato, sed immunem semper fuisse ab omni originali et actuali culpa, sanctamque et immaculatam.”

² The Council of Trent declared “non esse suæ intentionis, comprehendere in hoc decreto, ubi de peccato originali agitur, Beatam et Immaculatam Virginem Mariam, Dei Genitricem” (Sess. v. 5).

undoubted fact, but also shows that certain of them used exaggerated language with regard to the reverence due to the Blessed Virgin in expressing their doctrinal unanimity.

Those, however, who objected to the absolute exclusion of the Thomist view, did so, with hardly any exceptions, on the ground of cautious expediency. A summary of their replies will be found in Pusey's *Eirenicon*, i. pp. 127-144, and p. 351.

The Scotist doctrine of the Immunity now forms the basis of the official and authorised teaching of the Latin Obedience. The previous considerations which have been adduced in its favour are not drawn from the arguments of modern Roman theologians, such as Perrone.

It was thought better to show that, in the interests of Catholic reunion, other arguments than those of Roman official theology were available on the side of the Scotist doctrine of the Immunity, to prove that it need not be considered such an impassable barrier to reunion with the Holy See as some Easterns and some Anglicans have maintained it to be. We claim to have shown that, in itself, it involves the thought of God's unfrustrated Eternal Purpose, rather than any necessarily inherent additional reason for venerating the Blessed Virgin, as the *instrument* of that Purpose. The doctrine of the Immunity affords no pretext for exaggerated devotional language to the Mother, because the Redeeming Love of her *Son* and *Saviour* is the source of all her gifts of grace.

The Easterns, who do not teach it, use far more fervid devotions to the Blessed Virgin than the Westerns who do, as will be shown later on.¹

We desire to treat this subject from the standpoint of

¹ The references to the Blessed Virgin in the Eastern Liturgies do not maintain the reserve of the Western Mass, which contains no direct invocations of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Saints.

The Scotist
doctrine no
real barrier
to reunion.

“Reunion through reasonable Explanation.” We have endeavoured to set forth an explanation of the authorised teaching of the Roman Church which could be accepted by Easterns and Anglicans, without contradicting the language of their several formularies.

It involves no contradiction of existing Eastern and Anglican formularies.

It has been said that the Eastern Church has formally denied the Scotist doctrine of the Immunity. The Eastern Church was quite uninfluenced by the theology and thought of the West during the later Middle Ages. The Council of Bethlehem was summoned in 1672 to free the Eastern Church from the taint of Calvinism, which was expressed in certain writings imputed to Cyril Lucar, Patriarch of Constantinople. We shall find nothing in its doctrinal decisions incapable of being reconciled with the very cautiously worded decree of Trent on the Immunity, or with the more positive language of the Decree “*Ineffabilis Deus*” of 1854.

The Council of Bethlehem, A.D. 1672.

There are three principal authoritative formularies of the Eastern Church : (1) The Eighteen Decrees of the Synod of Jerusalem (commonly called the Synod of Bethlehem) ; (2) The Orthodox Confession of the Eastern Church, drawn up in 1643, and confirmed by the Synod of Bethlehem in 1672 ; (3) The Russian Catechism of 1839.

The principal formularies of the Eastern Church.

Decree VI. of the Synod of Bethlehem deals thus with Original Sin : “We believe the first man, created by God, to have fallen in Paradise, when, disregarding the Divine commandment, he yielded to the deceitful counsel of the Serpent. And hence hereditary sin flowed to his posterity ; so that none is born after the flesh who beareth not this burden, and experienceth not the fruits thereof in this present world. But by these *fruits* and this *burden* we do not understand sin such as impiety, blasphemy, murder . . . and whatsoever else is by

Decree VI. of Bethlehem on Original Sin.

our depraved choice committed contrary to the Divine Will, and not from nature, for many . . . such as the Divine Precursor, and especially the Mother of God the Word, the Everlasting Virgin Mary, experienced not these, or such-like faults, but only what the Divine Justice inflicted upon man as a punishment for the Transgression, such as sweats in labour, afflictions, bodily sickness, pains in childbirth, and, in fine, to live during our Pilgrimage a laborious life, and lastly, bodily death." This decree declares the Virgin Mary exempt from *actual* and wilful sin, and liable only to the sufferings of ordinary human nature.

Decree VII. exempts her specially from one of the consequences of sin, in that our Lord was miraculously born "without causing any pain or labour to His own Mother after the flesh, or any injury to her virginity (γεννηθέντα χωρίς τοῦ δοῦναι πόνον ἢ ὠδίναν τῇ ἰδίᾳ κατὰ σάρκα Μητρὶ ἢ τὴν παρθενίαν αὐτῆς διασεῖσαι)." This same Council condemned Cyril Lucar

Decree VII. on the mystery of the Virgin Birth.
Extracts from Cyril's sermons approved by the Council.

by quoting extracts from his previously published sermons. One of these extracts, thus approved by the Council, deals as follows with the sinlessness of the Blessed Virgin: "The wages of sin is death (Rom. vi. 23). The All-Holy Virgin had no sin, neither knew she sin. Man sinneth in these ways. In *thought* she was pure and undefiled, for she was ever engaged in the contemplation of God. In *deed* she was brighter and clearer than the sun. And in *word* she was sinless. . . . The All-Holy Virgin fell asleep, yet the cause of her Falling Asleep did not come from sin, but only from other causes which were physical; by which man had even before he sinned a physical nature, and was, we may suppose, subject to corruption. Yet God had given him such grace that he might, independent of nature, and by grace alone, have procured that he might not have died. So also with regard to the All-Holy Virgin, who, *although she had no sin*,

nevertheless had in herself a physical nature, and as a human being was subject to death—she likewise had such grace from God that she might, had she so desired, not have died, but have passed, as it were, alive into the heavens, but she did not so desire (ζῶσα ἐπήγενεν εἰς τοὺς οὐράνους, πλὴν οὐκ ἐβούλετο)” (chap. i. of the *Synod of Jerusalem*, pp. 34 and 35, Robertson’s translation).

The Synod would not have incorporated with their acts this extract from the sermons of Cyril Lucar, to prove that he was orthodox, unless Dositheus and his brother Prelates had themselves considered the language of Cyril justifiable. It is evident that they did not believe that the words of Cyril were inconsistent with their own decree on “Original Sin,” and Cyril compares the Blessed Virgin’s condition of grace with that of man before the Fall. When it is borne in mind that the decree of Pius IX. emphasises the fact that the Blessed Virgin’s Immunity came from “*A singular privilege of the Grace of Almighty God, in view of the merits of Christ Jesus the Saviour of Mankind*,” it does not seem impossible to reconcile the doctrine of the Redemption of the Blessed Virgin in her conception with the teaching of Cyril, as approved by the Council of Bethlehem. The Russian Catechism of 1839 was composed by Philaret, Archbishop of Moscow, and sanctioned by the Holy Governing Synod. It says of the Blessed Virgin that “as Mother of the Lord she excels in grace and nearness to God every created being, and therefore the Orthodox Church honours her far above the Cherubim and Seraphim” (Q. 190). In Q. 520 she is spoken of as “the Immaculate Mother” of God Incarnate. There are also Greek Office Hymns which use similar language. “Thou alone amongst women hast transcended the laws of nature, O Immaculate

These statements must harmonise with Eastern belief.

Cyril’s teaching reconcilable with the decree of 1854.

The Russian Catechism on the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Eastern hymns on the Blessed Virgin Mary.

One!" (Ode ix. for August 11th). "O thou who art altogether free from all stain of sin, from thy womb has been born Him Who cleanseth those who believe from all stain of sin" (Ode vii. for July 9th). Without laying too much stress on the fervour of Eastern sacred poetry, it appears evident that the Eastern decree on "Original Sin," does not necessarily exclude the Scotist

Exalted position of the Blessed Virgin in the Eastern Church.

doctrine of the Immunity. The Blessed Virgin is set above all Angels and Saints, to be honoured with "*hyperdulia*," as the Angels and Saints are with "*dulia*," in Question iv. of the Synod of Bethlehem (διὸ καὶ ἀσυγκριτῶς ὑπερέχειν ὑμνεῖται πάντων ἀγγέλων τε καὶ ἁγίων, ὅθεν καὶ ὑπερδουλικὴν αὐτῇ ἀπονέμομεν τὴν προσκύνησιν).¹ The Orthodox Confession of the Eastern Church (A.D. 1643) agrees with the Russian Catechism in its teaching. In Question xlii. it says that *κεχαριτωμένη*, in the Angelic Salutation, involves "a greater measure of grace than any created being possesses, and for this reason the Church exalts the Blessed Virgin above Cherubim and Seraphim." We claim to have shown that there is nothing in the authorised formularies of the Eastern Church to prevent agreement between Rome and Constantinople upon the doctrine of the Immunity.

Certain Eastern theologians, such as Khomiakoff, amongst recent writers, and the Easterns present at the Bonn Conference of 1874, may have denied the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin. But this is not the point. We claim to have proved that this doctrine may be reconciled with the existing Eastern formularies of Faith.

¹ This distinction is a commonplace of scholastic theology. S. Thomas says: "Mater Dei est pura creatura. Non ergo ei debetur adoratio Latriæ. Cum igitur B. Virgo sit pura creatura rationalis, non debetur ei adoratio Latriæ, sed solum veneratio Dulia, eminentius tamen quam cæteris creaturis in quantum ipsa est Mater Dei. Et ideo dicitur quod debetur ei non qualiscunque Dulia, sed Hyperdulia" (*Summa* III., Q. 25, A. 5 and also *Summa* II. ii., Q. 103).

We must now examine the Anglican formularies in the same spirit of reconciling explanation. First of all, we may remark that the Anglican Reformers were well versed in the theological controversies of their own times. They knew of the Scotist and Thomist controversy upon the Immunity, and they deliberately left the question open, as the Council of Trent did. They were clear enough in their language, when they condemned what they considered to be mediæval corruptions and abuses. If they had desired to condemn the Scotist doctrine of the Immunity, they would have done so in plain language. *But they did not*, and at the present day no Anglican could be censured for holding it. The Collect for Christmas

Day was adapted by the Reformers who compiled the Prayer Book of 1549, from a collect in the Mozarabic Breviary, which contained no mention of the Blessed Virgin. The Sarum Collects for the three Masses for Christmas Day (which are the same as in the Roman Missal) are characterised by the same omission. But the Reformers paraphrased the words "*nasci ex homine*" by the significant phrase "to be born of a pure Virgin," and the deliberate insertion of these words show that they desired to honour her name and her stainless purity, by supplying in the English Collect the omission which is common to all the Sarum and Roman Collects for Christmas Day.

The Preface for Christmas Day in the Book of Common Prayer is the composition of the Anglican Reformers of 1549. The Sarum Preface, like the Roman, contains no mention of the Blessed Virgin. The English Preface contains the remarkable words, "Who, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, was made Very Man of the substance of the Virgin Mary His Mother, and that without spot of sin (*idque sine labe peccati*), to make us clean from all sin." We may refer these words

primarily to our Lord's Immaculate Conception; but, secondarily, they harmonise with the Scotist doctrine of the Immunity of His Blessed Mother. We may further illustrate their meaning by a reference to the Homilies, Language of the Homilies. which, as we have already noted, contain sundry statements displeasing to the Protestantism of to-day. The Homily on Repentance says: "Jesus Christ, Who, being True and natural God, equal and of one substance with the Father, did, at the time appointed, take upon Him our frail nature, in the Blessed Virgin's womb, and that of *her undefiled substance*, so that He might be a Mediator between God and us." The Homily on Wilful Rebellion speaks of "the obedience of this most Noble and most Virtuous Lady, which doth well teach us who in comparison to her are most base and vile." Both these allusions to the Blessed Virgin's sinlessness are compatible with the Scotist doctrine, and the reference to her "undefiled substance" seems to express it with sufficient clearness. Although the Homilies are not to be quoted authoritatively, it is legitimate to use these passages to illustrate the phraseology of the Prayer Book, by which we must explain the Articles of Religion.

It has been assumed, without any valid reason, that Article XV., "Of Christ alone without sin," is an indirect denial of the Redemption of the Blessed Virgin from original sin at the moment of her conception. The Article asserts the Catholic Faith in the words, "Christ, in the truth of our nature, was made like unto us in all things, sin only except, from which He was clearly void (*a quo prorsus erat immunis*) both in His Flesh and in His Spirit. . . . But all we the rest, although baptized and born again in Christ, yet offend in many things; and if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." This latter statement concerns the baptized members of Christ, and cannot, as Sancta Clara

The meaning of Art. XV.

"All we the rest" does not include the Blessed Virgin.

observes, be applied to the Blessed Virgin, who was sanctified before her birth, and, as the *Deipara*, had no need to be made by Baptism a member of Him Whom she carried in her womb. Besides which, as Dr. Gibson observes : "The Blessed Virgin is not mentioned in the Article. As a rule, the Articles are perfectly direct and plain-spoken in their condemnation of erroneous views, and if their compilers had had this doctrine" (*i.e.* the Immaculate Conception) "in view, it is most unlikely that they would have contented themselves with so *indirect* a condemnation of it. The expression in the Article is '*all we the rest, although baptized,*' etc. ; and it would be perfectly open . . . to hold that the Blessed Virgin was never baptized, and that, *therefore*, her case is not considered in the Article at all. A far more probable view is that this Article was aimed against the errors of some among the Anabaptists" (Gibson *On Thirty-nine Articles*, pp. 440, 441) .

Dr. Gibson writes from the standpoint of a fair-minded Anglican, and his conclusions on Article XV. will commend themselves to persons unbiassed by controversy. We now claim to have proved that the Anglican formularies do not deny the Scotist doctrine of the Immunity, and that they are just as capable of being reconciled with it as the Eastern formularies are.

There is a noteworthy piece of history in connection with the successive revisions of the Anglican Kalendar. December 8th had been observed by the Church of England as the Festival of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary during the Middle Ages.¹ In the Kalendar of the first Prayer Book of 1549

The Anglican
formularies
can be recon-
ciled with the
Immunity of
the Blessed
Virgin Mary.

¹ The Festival of the Conception arose in the Eastern Church about the sixth century. S. John Damascene (A.D. 756) rewrote a Directorium of the Eastern Church, which contains a liturgical hymn in which the Blessed Virgin is called "the only undefiled and beautiful

all the Festivals of the Blessed Virgin, except the Annunciation and the Purification, were omitted. This omission continued in the Book of 1552, and in the Elizabethan

Prayer Book of 1559. But in 1561 a Commission was appointed to revise the Kalendar and the Tables of Lessons. This Commission

The Revised
Kalendar of
1561.

restored the three Festivals of the Conception, the Nativity, and the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. They reappeared in the Kalendar of the next edition of the Prayer Book, and have held their place ever since on December 8th, September 8th, and July 2nd—the dates assigned to them respectively in the Sarum and Roman Kalendars. It is very difficult to retrace steps taken under the influence of reaction. We must give due credit to Archbishop Parker and the Commissioners of 1561 for their effort *revocare gradum*, after the *facilis descensus* of the reign of Edward VI. It may fairly be inferred from Archbishop Parker's action that he desired the Church of England to be at one with the rest of Christendom, in paying due honour and reverence to the Blessed Virgin.

The restoration of the Festival of the Conception was all the more remarkable as it had become very much identified with the Scotist doctrine of the Immunity. The Thomist view of the Festival,¹ which referred it solely to the Sanctification of the Blessed

The restored
Festival of the
Conception.

dove." S. Andrew of Crete, in the seventh century, speaks of the festival, as it is now known in the Eastern Kalendars, as "the Conception of Anne, the Mother of the Θεοτοκος." The Eastern Church keeps it on December 9th. The Western Church received from the East the Festival of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is officially ordered to be observed in Archbishop Islip's *Constitutions* (A.D. 1362), and must have been observed for some time previously, although Archbishop Mepham's order for its observance in 1328 only ordered it for the Province of Canterbury (Wilkins, *Concilia*, i. p. 552).

¹ S. Bernard (in 1140) wrote to the Canons of Lyons, deprecating their adoption of the Festival of the Conception. He says, "Miramur

Virgin before her birth, was not so widely held ; but the Anglican restoration of the Festival to the Kalendar, after its abrogation for some years, shows that the authorities of the Church of England did not at that time desire to exclude either view, and did not consider that the Anglican formularies were intended to close a controversy which the Council of Trent ultimately left open. We may, at this stage of our

The Anglican Divines from 1536 to 1662 taught the Sinlessness and Perpetual Virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

argument, state broadly that the leading Anglican Divines, from the beginning of the Reformation in 1536 to its close with the Present Prayer Book of 1662, held the Catholic and Primitive doctrine concerning the sinlessness and Perpetual Virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

With regard to her sinlessness, the following quotations are certainly reconcilable with the Scotist doctrine of the Immunity, even if they do not directly imply it.

Bishop Andrewes, who spoke very strongly of exaggerated devotions to the Blessed Virgin,¹ did not hesitate, in his well-known *Preces Privatæ*, to speak of her as "the Most Holy, Immaculate, pre-eminently Blessed Mary, Mother of God and Ever Virgin."²

Antony Stafford, a devout layman, published in 1635 a Life satis quod visum fuit quibusdam vestrum, voluisse mutare colorem optimum, novam inducendo celebritatem, quam ritus Ecclesiæ nescit non probat ratio," etc., concluding with a reference to the authority of the Holy See (Ep. 44).

S. Thomas says, "Nec tamen per hoc, quod Festum Conceptionis celebratur, datur intelligi quod in conceptione fuerit sancta, sed quia quo tempore sanctificata fuerit, ignoratur, celebratur Festum sanctificationis eius potius quam conceptionis, in die Conceptionis ipsius" (*S. T.*, pars iii., Q. 27, A. 2).

¹ *Responsio ad Bellarm.* chap. viii.

² Bishop Andrewes penned the phrase in Greek and Latin, as follows: "Τῆς Παναγίας, ἀχράντου, ὑπερευλογημένης Θεοτόκου καὶ ἀειπαρθένου Μαρίας. Sanctissimæ, intemeratæ, super cæteros benedictæ, Deiparæ et semper Virginis Mariæ" (*Preces Privatæ*, Oxford ed., p. 141).

of the Blessed Virgin called *The Female Glory*. It was

published by the authority of Archbishop Laud. Antony Stafford's Life of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Burton, the Puritan preacher, attacked it in a sermon published in 1636, for which he was censured by the Star Chamber. Prynne notes this approval of Stafford's book by Archbishop Laud in *Canterbury's*

Doom, and makes it a principal charge against him as "audaciously Popish." The fact of Laud's approval of this book, and its defence by Heylin, gives it a certain importance. The

author submits his book "to the Censure and Determination of the Church of England, whose Approbation I know I shall have" (p. 168). He quotes Luther as saying "that none but the Virgin Mary *either was, or ever shall be so holy*" (p. 173). He quotes other foreign Pro-

Æcolampadius. testant divines. Æcolampadius says: "I trust in God it shall never be said of me, that I did oppose the dignity of Mary, towards whom to be never so little ill affected I hold to be a most certain sign of a reprobate mind" (p. 174). Bullinger says: "If Mary be

Bullinger. Blessed amongst all women, and to be pronounced 'Blessed' by all nations, most unhappy are those Counterfeit Christians who rob her of the praise due to her. Needs must that she be indued with a singular and perpetual Virginity and Purity, who is especially chosen by God, to be the Temple of His Son, and the Mother of the Most Holy" (p. 175). Antony Stafford says that

he selects these words of foreign Reformers in preference to quotations from the Fathers "because the Fathers are in no ways suspected of neglect towards her" (p. 173). He uses language about the sanctification of the Blessed Virgin before her birth which clearly points to the Scotist doctrine of the Immunity. "Our dearest Princess, therefore, was deservedly a Queen ere born; received a crown sooner than sight; and found her

Antony Stafford on the Immunity.

Throne, *seated upon the threshold of life*. And what crown was she presented with? Not one to compose which the East and West joined their treasures; but a crown in the making whereof every Virtue and all the Graces had a hand. Nor did any vain mortal place it upon her sacred temples, but God Himself: Who thought nothing too dear, nor omitted any Ornament that might embellish this goodly Edifice, wherein Himself meant to reside. Having thus adorned and honoured her, He placed her in this lower world for the good of all" (p. 16). He says previously: "O ye Angels, to *you* it is only given not to sin, but on *her* is conferred what *you* cannot merit, to bear the reparation of Man's ruin. The Apostles, those holy Tapers of the Primitive Church, sometimes burnt *dim*, and were obscured with the fog of sin, but her Brightness nothing vitious could lessen" (p. 8). In lines written on the childhood of the Blessed Virgin in the same volume Stafford says:

For Eve's offence, *not hers*, she did begin
To learn repentance.

These lines may be fitly paralleled with Bishop Ken's verses, written a generation later, on the sanctification of the Blessed Virgin before her birth:

The Holy Ghost His Temple in her built,
Cleansed from *congenial*, kept from mortal guilt;
And *from the moment* that her blood was fired
Into her heart celestial love inspired.¹

KEN'S *Christian Year*, p. 58.

Bishop Ken's third line may be paralleled with the words of the Decree of 1854, "*in primo instanti suæ conceptionis*," while the whole stanza teaches the Scotist doctrine of the Immunity in unmistakable language. The general trend of Stafford's quaint devotion points in the same direction,

¹ Bishop Ken's poems on the "Christian Year" were first published in 1721 some years after his death. It is said that Keble admired them very much, and based the idea of his own "Christian Year" upon them.

although his style is more obscure. As we have already said, the importance of Stafford's book consists in its being approved by Archbishop Laud, defended by his Chaplain Dr. Heylin, and the further fact that the condemnation of Burton for attacking it formed one of Prynne's charges against Archbishop Laud himself.

Dr. Mark Frank was a distinguished Cambridge divine, who was deprived of his Fellowship at Pembroke in 1644 by the Parliament, and restored in 1662 to become Master of Pembroke and Archdeacon of S. Albans. In his *Sermons on Festivals* he says (of the Annunciation), "Who fitter to come to her? She was an immaculate and unspotted Virgin:—to such a Virgin, one so highly favoured as to be made the Mother of God, what messenger could come less than an Angel? None now, you see, more fit for this business than an Angel—than the Angel. Gabriel too . . . So we have done with him; come we now to her—a *greater than he*—if we may speak with Epiphanius,¹ and some others" (vol. ii. pp. 38, 39).

"*The Lord is with thee*:—It is affirmation, appreciation, and prediction, all three here to our Blessed Lady, . . . and the Lord thus being with her, all good must needs be with her (*Ib.* pp. 43, 44). *Thou that art highly favoured*, so our new translation" (A.V. of 1611) "renders it; *full of grace*, so our old one hath it from the Latin *gratia plena*; and both are right; for κεχαριτωμένη will carry both. Grace is favour; God's grace is divine favour—full of His grace, full of His favour—all comes to one. . . . For sanctifying graces, none fuller, *solo Deo excepto*, God alone excepted, saith Epiphanius"² (*Ib.* pp. 45, 46). "A complete Saviour

¹ Ἀγγέλων ἀνωτέρα γέγονεν ἡ Παρθένος, μείζοτέρα τῶν Χερουβείμ καὶ τῶν Σεραφεῖμ ἀρέσκουσα τῷ βασιλεῖ Χριστῷ ὡς ἀξία δούλη (Epiphani. *De Laudibus Beatae Virginis Mariæ*, tom. ii. p. 298, Paris ed., 1622).

² Χαῖρε, κεχαριτωμένη στυλοειδὴς νεφέλη ἡ τὸν Θεὸν ἔχουσα τὸν ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ τὸν λαὸν καθοδηγήσαντα, τί εἶπω; καὶ τί λαλήσω; ὅτι χωρὶς Θεοῦ μόνου πάντων ἀνωτέρα ὑπάρχει (Epiphani., tom. ii. p. 293).

now ; God and Man ; God, begotten the Son, coeternal with the Father, born into the world of a Virgin pure and Immaculate " (vol. i. p. 210). " That most pure and Immaculate Virgin " (*Ib.* p. 344).

We turn now to an older Cambridge doctor, Bishop Hall
 Bishop Hall. of Norwich, who was distinctly what we should
 now call a Low Churchman. He says of the Incarnation : " He that meant to take man's nature without man's corruption, would be the seed of the woman without man ; and amongst all women of a pure Virgin . . . How justly do we bless her whom the Angel pronounceth Blessed ! How worthily is she honoured of men, whom the Angel proclaimed beloved of God ! O Blessed Mary, he cannot bless thee, he cannot honour thee too much, that deifies thee not " (Hall's *Contemplations*, vol. iii. pp. 23, 24).

We may close these quotations with the well-known words
 Bishop Pearson. of Bishop Pearson : " We believe the Mother of
 our Lord to have been not only before and after His Nativity, but also for ever, the most Immaculate and Blessed Virgin . . . If Elisabeth cried out, *Blessed art thou among women* when Christ was but newly conceived, what expressions of honour can we think sufficient now that Christ is in Heaven, and that Mother with Him ? We cannot bear too reverend a regard unto the Mother of our Lord, so long as we give her not that worship which is due unto the Lord Himself " (*On Creed*, vol. i. pp. 272-278).

We may here once more remark that it ill becomes those
 Value of Caro- who call themselves Catholics to belittle the
 line Divines. teaching of the Caroline Divines because occasional controversial statements, of a strong anti-Roman bias, are to be found in their writings. Men who lived though the troublous times of the Gunpowder Plot could not be expected to view Rome from the standpoint of the twentieth century. And modern Anglo-Catholics suffer from

a far worse kind of Protestantism in their neglect and reserve in treating of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints.

The Tractarian leaders were filled with the spirit of the Fathers and the Caroline Divines. Dr. Pusey, Bishop Forbes, and Canon Liddon taught Modern Anglican teaching is far below their level. plainly what the Church believes regarding the Blessed Virgin. Apart from an exceptional sermon¹ here and there, where do we *now* find modern Anglican teaching on the Blessed Virgin in harmony with the quotations from the Caroline Divines which have just been cited in these pages? An occasional allusion to the Blessed Virgin may now and then occur in the writings of modern Anglicans, marked, for the most part, by a timidity of expression unknown to the Tractarians, and below the level reached by Œcolampadius, and other foreign Protestant divines, quoted by Stafford; and this un-Catholic neglect has already found its Nemesis amongst us in semi-Nestorian teaching on the Incarnation, and open denial of the Virgin Conception and Virgin Birth of our Blessed Lord.

Until Catholics in communion with Canterbury recover Need of recovery. this lost ground, and restore to our people the true teaching of the Catholic Church on the blessed Virgin Mary, with the open fearlessness of the Caroline Divines, our teaching on the Incarnation will imperceptibly lose its force and power, and we shall be driven yet wider apart from the historic Christianity of the East and the West.

We claim to have shown that the Anglican formularies do not sever us from the rest of Christendom in this respect. It is our leading priests that are *semper pavidī* on this point, for we may note here the courage of the Bishop of Rochester who has recently given his *imprimatur* to an Altar Book containing proper Collects, Epistles, and

¹ Such an exceptional sermon is to be found in Canon Knox Little's *Manchester Sermons*, No. xvi., "On the Beatitude of Mary."

Gospels, for the Conception, Nativity, and Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.¹ This fact may possibly induce some of our priests to preach openly on the mysteries of these holy Festivals, and teach our people plainly their true spiritual significance.

The exaggerations in devotion which Cardinal Newman condemned are no valid excuse for modern Anglican silence. It is a relief to turn from the silence of our clergy at the present day to the devout poetry of an Anglican layman, who wrote before the Catholic revival had touched the English Church.

Exaggerations
form no excuse
for silence.

Wordsworth. Mother! whose virgin bosom was uncrosth
With the least shade of thought to sin allied!
Woman! above all women glorified;
Our tainted nature's solitary boast;
Purer than foam on central ocean tost,
Brighter than Eastern skies at daybreak strewn
With fancied roses, than the unblemished moon
Before her wane begins on Heaven's blue coast;
Thy image falls on earth.

WORDSWORTH, *Eccles. Sonnets*.

The reference in the last line is to the Iconoclastic fury of certain Protestant fanatics during the Reformation period. Wordsworth wrote the Ecclesiastical Sonnets in 1822, when the kindly intercourse between the *émigré* priests, who fled to England to escape the "red fool fury of the Seine," and the English people, had softened the bitterness of insular prejudice against "Papists." Sir Walter Scott's novels had a like influence in paving the way for the Catholic Revival of 1833. But Words-

Sir Walter
Scott.

worth's immortal line, "Our tainted nature's solitary boast," teaching as it does the Scotist doctrine of the Immunity, is all the more remarkable because the poet's conclusions must have been based on the traditions of the Caroline

¹ *The English Liturgy*, with a preface by the Bishop of Rochester. Rivingtons, 1903.

Divines, which enabled him to rise above the influence of the Hanoverian type of Churchmanship, under which he was brought up. A layman of our own day has been bolder than the Anglican Clergy. Lord Halifax writes

as follows upon the Redemption of the Blessed Virgin from Original Sin : “ To suppose that it pleased God, in view of the merits of her Son, to extend to His Blessed Mother in a greater degree the same grace which we know from the words of Scripture it pleased Him to confer on S. John the Baptist, is surely not a proposition which of itself need alarm any one. S. John Baptist, we are told, was full of the Holy Ghost from his mother’s womb. Is there, in the light of that fact, any difficulty in believing that the Blessed Virgin may by God’s grace have been filled with the Holy Ghost from the moment of her conception ? ” (*England and the Holy See*, by Spencer Jones, Introd. p. xvi).

There is, of course, a strong prejudice in the minds of many against the action of Pius IX. in terminating the controversy on the Immunity Decree of 1854, after it had lasted some five hundred years, and had been so thoroughly discussed that the affirmative view had become predominant throughout the Latin Obedience. But it does not beseem Anglicans, who belong to a communion that has imposed upon its Clergy the acceptance of certain doctrinal statements in the Articles, which lie outside the scope of the Creeds, to object to the Roman Church for declaring the doctrine of the Immunity to be in consonance with the Creeds. It may be said that the comparison is an unfair one, and that such an analogy cannot carry much weight. But that

Prejudice
against the
Decree of 1854.

It is not an
insuperable
bar to re-
union.

is not exactly the point before us, which is that Anglicans have no right to regard the Decree of 1854 as if it formed an insuperable bar to the reunion of Christendom, when our formularies and the

statements of our leading post-Reformation divines not only do not deny the Immunity, but may be interpreted, with the exception of certain Tractarian utterances, in a manner favourable to its acceptance.

One great barrier to its acceptance is to be found in the Protestant doctrine of Original Sin, which can be traced to Luther and Calvin. It involves the total corruption of human nature.¹

Luther denied absolutely the freedom of the human will, and, if Calvin did not follow him verbally in this point, he did so practically, in holding with Luther that man was predestined to sin by a species of fatalistic necessity. Luther taught that Original Sin made fallen man "not only a sinner, but sin itself." Calvin says that by Original Sin, "the Image of God has been utterly effaced from the soul of man," but these heretical opinions on Original Sin did not in any way influence the Anglican Article. We find

Article IX. is *Sancta Clara* stating that Article IX. is a statement of Catholic doctrine, and the great German theologian Möhler endorses this view from a different standpoint.² But though Article IX., as it stands,

¹ The Westminster Confession uses the following language, which appears to level the nature of man with that of evil spirits: "From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to evil, do proceed all actual transgressions" (*West. Conf.* c. 6). So the *Confessio Helvetica*, ii. c. 8: "Peccatum autem intelligimus esse nativam illam hominis corruptionem . . . qua concupiscentiis pravis immersi et a bono aversi, ad omne vero malum propensi, pleni omni nequitia diffidentia, contemptu et odio Dei, nihil boni ex nobis ipsis facere imo ne cogitare quidem possumus."

² Möhler wrote before the Catholic movement of 1833 had gained any influence, and he did not understand the position of the Anglican Church. His favourable judgment of Article IX. is all the more valuable as it occurs in the midst of a very trenchant condemnation of the Lutheran and Calvinistic formularies. His whole chapter on Original Sin is worth most careful study (*Symbolism*, chap. ii. pp. 47-80).

is in accordance with the Catholic doctrine of Original Sin, as the Eastern formularies also are,¹ the false opinions on the subject have had sufficient influence upon English religious thought to make it necessary to explain its true bearings upon the doctrine of the Immunity.

The Catholic doctrine of Original Sin is that it is a deprivation² of the *donum supernaturale* of original righteousness, coupled as, S. Thomas says, "with a disordered disposition resulting from the dissolution of the harmony of original righteousness."³ Dr. Gibson defines "original righteousness" as being "partly natural, partly supernatural; natural in that it proceeded from free will and the power of choice, supernatural in that certain special gifts and graces, in addition to free will, were required for its exercise."⁴

The Scotist doctrine of the Immunity of the Blessed Virgin is thus based upon a conception of original sin which is utterly opposed to the innovations of Luther and Calvin. From the Protestant point of view the Immunity of the Blessed Virgin involves the impossible position that she had a different nature from her parents,

¹ For the Eastern doctrine of Original Sin, see Council of Bethlehem, Decree VI., and the Orthodox Confession of 1643, Q. 24.

² Dr. Field, who wrote earlier than the Caroline Divines, and links them with the Elizabethan period, says: "If we speak of original sin *formally*, it is the privation of those excellent gifts of Divine Grace, enabling us to know, love, fear, serve, honour, and trust in God, and to do the things He delighteth in, which Adam had and lost" (*Field on the Church*, App. to bk. iii. c. 5).

³ "Est enim quædam inordinata dispositio, proveniens ex dissolutione illius harmoniæ in qua consistebat ratio originalis iustitiæ" (*S. T. I. ii. Q. 82, A. 1*).

⁴ *Gibson on Thirty-nine Articles*, p. 365, where the teaching of Bishop Bull on the *donum supernaturale* is referred to (*Works*, ii. p. 52).

and that she was *herself*, instead of our Lord, the new departure for the human race, and that in *her person*, instead of in *His*, the entail of original sin was cut off. Cardinal

Newman says: "We consider that in Adam she died, as others; that she was included, together with the whole race in Adam's

sentence; that she incurred his debt as we do; but that, for the sake of Him Who was to redeem her and us upon the Cross, to her the debt was remitted by anticipation, on her the sentence was not carried out, except indeed as regards her natural death, for she died when her time came, as others. All this we teach, but we deny that she had original sin; for by original sin we mean, as I have already said, something negative, viz. this only, the *deprivation* of that supernatural unmerited grace which Adam and Eve had on their creation—deprivation, and the consequences of deprivation.¹ Mary could not merit, any more than they, the restoration of that grace; but it was restored to her by God's free bounty, from the very first moment of her existence, and thereby, in fact, she never came under the original curse which consisted in the loss of it. And she

¹ Suarez teaches the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin in terms practically identical with the language of Cardinal Newman:

(i) "B. Virgo peccavit in Adamo, ex quo tanquam ex radice infecta per seminalem rationem est orta; hæc est tota ratio contrahendi originale peccatum, quod est ex in conceptionis nisi gratia Dei præveniat" (*Opp.* tom. 17, p. 7, p. 16).

(ii) "B. Virgo, ex vi suæ conceptionis fuit obnoxia originali peccato, seu debitum habuit contrahendi illud, nisi divina gratia fuisset impeditum" (*Ib.* p. 16).

(iii) "Dicendum B. Virginem in ipso primo instanti conceptionis suæ fuisse sanctificatam, et ab originali peccato præservatam" (*Ib.* p. 19).

Cornelius à Lapide says: "The Blessed Virgin sinned in Adam, and incurred the necessity of contracting original sin; but original sin itself she did not contract in fact, nor had it; for she was anticipated by the grace of God, which excluded all sin from her in the first moment of her conception" (*Comment. on Rom. v. v. 12*).

had this special privilege in order to fit her to become the Mother of her and our Redeemer, to fit her mentally and spiritually for it; so that by the aid of the first grace she might so grow in grace, that when the angel came, and her Lord was at hand, she might be 'full of grace,' prepared, as far as a creature could be prepared, to receive Him into her bosom. . . . There has not been a clear understanding among Catholics, what exactly is meant by the Immaculate Conception. To many it seemed to imply that the Blessed Virgin did not die in Adam,¹ that she did not come under the penalty of the Fall, that she was not redeemed, that she was conceived in some way inconsistent with the verse in the *Miserere* psalm. If controversy had in earlier days so cleared the subject as to make it plain to all that the doctrine meant nothing else than that, in fact, in her case the general sentence of mankind was not carried out, and that, by means of the indwelling in her of Divine grace from the first moment of her being (and this is all the decree of 1854 has declared²), I cannot believe that the doctrine

¹ A modern Roman Catholic divine writes as follows: "Suarez, who was one of the most zealous and affectionate champions of the Immaculate Conception, declares it to be his matured conviction that *Mary sinned in Adam*; that is, she was *by nature* included in the common disaster, and was only rescued by grace" (*De Myst. Vit. Chr. Disp. iii. § 2*).

"Scotus entirely coincides with Suarez in the maintenance of the same doctrine. The Papal Definition declares that Mary, in the first moment of her Conception, was preserved from original sin, *by a peculiar grace and privilege of Almighty God, in regard of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the human race* . . . Our Blessed Lady, therefore, was most truly redeemed, after a sublime manner, by the merits of her Divine Son. He died for her; He shed His precious blood for her; for He gave Himself a redemption for all" (Harper, *Peace through the Truth*, Sermon i. pp. 327-331).

² The actual wording of the decree is as follows: "Beatissimam Virginem Mariam in primo instanti suæ conceptionis fuisse singulari omnipotentis Dei gratia et privilegio, intuitu meritorum Christi Iesu Salvatoris humani generis, ab omni originalis culpæ labe præservatam immunem."

would ever have been opposed ; for an instinctive sentiment has led Christians jealously to put the Blessed Mary aside when sin comes into discussion " (Newman's *Letter to Pusey*, 1866, pp. 51, 52).

Cardinal Newman's lucid statement may be illustrated by Canon Liddon's eloquent comment upon the words "My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." "Let us reflect," he says, "on the meaning of this expression on Mary's lips.

Unique as was her office, magnificent as was the endowment of grace bestowed upon her, singular as were her humility, her purity, her likeness to the Most Holy, she has, and she needs, a Saviour. . . . Hers is not a soul which finds its way to the courts of Heaven without recourse to that One *Name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved* (Acts iv. 12). There is, in fact, no intermediate position in the Kingdom of Grace between the Saviour and the saved ; no neutral post, in which nothing is received and from which nothing is bestowed. There is one Saviour, and all others are simply saved, be their place in the spheres of glory what it may, and whatever the graces that may have been here bestowed on them. Mary owes what she *was* on earth, what she *is* in Heaven, no less entirely to the merits and the Precious Blood of her Divine Son, than does the humblest Christian among us at this hour" (Liddon, *Magnificat*, p. 28).

We find Perrone teaching the same doctrine in more formal terms,¹ and another Roman Catholic writer comparing the Immunity of the Blessed Virgin from original sin with the condition of the baptized, before they begin to decline from the

Perrone
teaches the
same doctrine.

¹ "Omnes profecto homines a Christo redempti sunt, et a peccato liberati, adeoque et B. Virgo, cum hoc tamen discrimine, quod reliqui omnes redempti fuerint redemptione *subsequente* peccatum, B. vero

grace then given to them. "For those," he says, "who believe thoroughly in the Divine Gift bestowed in Baptism there can be no difficulty in believing in the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God. It was but the anticipation of what is accomplished in our own persons by the same Divine Agent, only carried out and perpetuated to perfection in her case."¹ A careful distinction has been drawn between the conception of the body and the infusion of the soul in Bishop Ullathorne's treatise on the Immaculate Conception.² He holds with Cardinal Newman, that the Blessed Virgin was conceived as all the children of Adam are conceived, so far as her body was concerned, but that the infusion of her soul by God, which Perrone calls her "passive" conception,³ is alone to be considered in reference to her Immunity from original sin. We may now summarise our conclusions: (i) The whole Catholic Church has always taught the sinlessness of the Blessed Virgin Mary.⁴ (ii) The Scotist doctrine of the Immunity,

The temporary immunity of the newly baptized compared with the immunity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Bishop Ullathorne.

the infusion of the soul in Bishop Ullathorne's treatise on the Immaculate Conception.² He holds with Cardinal Newman, that the Blessed Virgin was conceived as all the children of Adam are conceived, so far as her body was concerned, but that the infusion of her soul by God, which Perrone calls her "passive" conception,³ is alone to be considered in reference to her Immunity from original sin. We may now summarise our conclusions: (i) The whole Catholic Church has always taught the sinlessness of the Blessed Virgin Mary.⁴ (ii) The Scotist doctrine of the Immunity,

Virgo redemptione *antecedente* ne peccatum contraheret" (Perrone, *Praelect. Theol.* vol. v. p. 165).

Commenting on the phrase "intuitu meritorum Christi," he says: "Patet non excludi B. Virginem a communi redemptione, sed eam prorsus fuisse sanguine Christi redemptam, quamvis singulari illa redemptionis specie, quæ præservationis fuerit, ita ut Christus illi meruerit præservationem ab originalis labis incursu" (*Ib.* p. 151).

¹ Ffoulkes, *Christendom's Divisions*, p. 105.

² Bishop Ullathorne's *Treatise on the Immaculate Conception*, pp. 58-60.

³ "Exploratum omnibus esse debet in hac propositione (*i.e.* the Decree of 1854) unice agi de conceptione *passiva*, seu de primo illo instanti, quo anima B. M. Virginis a Deo creata et in corpus infusa est" (*Ib.* p. 151).

⁴ There are three isolated passages in S. Basil, S. Chrysostom, and S. Cyril of Alexandria that appear to deny the sinlessness of the Blessed Virgin. S. Basil, in his 260th Epistle, appears to teach

as defined by the Decree of 1854, is no bar to reunion because it severs, by an infinite gulf, the conception of the Blessed Virgin from the conception of the Word made flesh. She was conceived by earthly parents, and (to use Cardinal Newman's words) "was included together with the whole human race in Adam's sentence."

Our Lord alone formed the new departure for the human race, as the Second Adam, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost. But as Adam's transgression was not permitted to mar the Eternal Purpose of God in becoming Incarnate, so its effects were

Our Lord is
the Second
Adam.

that the Blessed Virgin Mary doubted at the foot of the Cross. S. Chrysostom (*In Matt.* Hom. xlv.) imputed to her vainglory in desiring to speak with our Lord. S. Cyril (*In Joann.* lib. xii.) accuses her of woman's weakness, like S. Basil, involving doubt when she saw Him crucified. In the first place, these passages stand alone, and cannot be set against the universal consent of Christendom. And, in the next place, S. Basil and S. Cyril do not actually impute sin to the Blessed Virgin Mary, but only a weakness of woman's nature that was inherent in their Oriental conception of woman's inferiority. S. Chrysostom's words are not capable of any such explanation. No other writer of antiquity has ever explained the incident at Cana, or the event described in S. Matt. xii. 48-50, as he has done. We cannot regard the isolated opinion of a single Father, be he never so eminent, as making theological "case-law" for the Catholic Church. We have to deal with the *consensus Patrum*, and the whole weight of this consent and the whole mind of the Catholic Church is against S. Chrysostom's exegesis, which is unsupported even by modern commentators such as Bengel and Stier. Archdeacon Hutchings quotes S. Augustine's words: "*All have sinned except the Holy Virgin Mary*," etc., and then adds: "On the other hand, S. Basil, S. Chrysostom, and S. Cyril of Alexandria seem to attribute to her the sin of doubt, and the infirmity of vainglory, the one at the Cross, and the other at the Marriage Feast. But the view of these Fathers is hardly in keeping with the general Tradition on the subject. The main current of Patristic teaching, and not the *obiter dicta* of one or two Fathers, must be appealed to in support of a doctrine or belief, otherwise S. Gregory Nyssen's statement as to eternal punishment would be a ground for accepting Universalism" (*The Person and Work of the Holy Ghost*, p. 94).

not allowed to mar the purity of her who was predestined to be the Mother of God. Our Lord redeemed her from original sin from the first moment of her being, so that she was preserved, as Scotus says, from being "hostile" to Him. The Scotist doctrine of the Immunity thus

Infinite distance between the holiness of our Lord, and that of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

carefully preserves the infinite distance between the *inherent* sanctity of our Lord's humanity, and the *derived* and *redeemed* sanctity of His Blessed Mother.¹ Her own words, "My spirit

hath rejoiced in God my Saviour," measure the true distance between the Deliverer and Redeemer from sin, original and actual, and the redeemed one, even though that redeemed one be her whom "all generations shall call

The doctrine of the Immunity can be accepted by all Christians.

Blessed." We may claim, then, that the Immunity of the Blessed Virgin from original and actual sin, if rightly viewed in the light of faith and reason, is a doctrine which forms no

barrier to the *reunion of Christendom*.

¹ Schouppe, one of the most lucid and thoughtful of the Roman Catholic theologians of the nineteenth century, writes as follows upon the distinction between the *inherent* sinlessness of our Lord and the *redeemed* sinlessness of the Blessed Virgin: "Impeccabilitas Christi non tantum peccatum, sed omnem possibilitatem peccandi absolute excludebat; erat enim participatio ipsius impeccabilitatis *divinæ*. Nam fundabatur non tantum in gratia . . . sed etiam in ipsa unione hypostatica cum Persona Verbi. Impeccabilitas B. V. Mariæ fundabatur in *gratia*, qua præventa fuit et munita a principio vitæ suæ usque ad exitum; qua fuit præservata sicut ab originali ita ab omni etiam vel levissima actuali labe, atque ab ipso fomite, qui probabilius, non tantum ligatus in Deipara, sed penitus extinctus fuit" (*Elementa Theol. Dogm.* tom. i. p. 527).

CHAPTER II.

THE NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN, HER VOCATION
AS FULFILLED IN HER OBEDIENCE, AND HER PLACE
AS THE ΘΕΟΤÓΚΟΣ AND THE SECOND EVE IN THE
ECONOMY OF REDEMPTION.

Riguarda omai nella faccia ch' a Cristo
Più s' assomiglia : che la sua chiarezza
Sola ti può disporre a veder Cristo.

DANTE, *Paradiso*, cant. xxxii. v. 85.

A MODERN Protestant divine has written as follows upon the "Præparatio Evangelica," as fulfilled in the birth of the Blessed Virgin. "We may suppose that the Holy Spirit had been sanctifying the holy line for generations, preparing it for that fulness of time when the Messiah was to be born of it, and that in Mary, the Mother of our Lord, that sanctifying had reached the supreme point of the *entire removal* from her, even at her birth, of *all the taint and defilement of original sin*, so that she was fitted from her birth, by her purity, innocence, and consecrated sanctity, to be the Mother of our Lord."¹ These are very significant and remarkable words, coming as they do from a writer who does not profess to hold the Faith as taught by authority, and who has, in other works, shown that the traditions of historical Christianity have very little weight with him.

¹ *The Incarnation of the Lord*, by C. A. Briggs, D.D., Professor of the Union Theological Seminary in New York (sermon on the Virgin Birth).

The preparation of the world for the Incarnation of our Lord is the slowly unfolding history of God's unfrustrated Eternal Purpose. The Fall of Man was permitted to delay its fulfilment until, in the fulness of time, "God sent forth His Son made of a woman" (Gal. iv. 4). The "Præparatio Evangelica" reached its culminating point when the Woman, whose Seed was to crush the power of the Serpent, was born into the world.¹ Without entering into the vexed question of the Genealogies of our Lord, as recorded by S. Matthew and S. Luke, it is sufficient to say that the Blessed Virgin and S. Joseph were of the royal "house and lineage of David," and that thus she was not only the Second Eve, the Woman linked to humanity as a whole, but the heiress of the promises of the chosen race from Abraham to David.

The tradition that S. Joachim and S. Anne were the parents of the Blessed Virgin is spoken of by S. Joachim and S. Anne. S. Epiphanius (A.D. 380) as an undisputed fact. He uses it as an argument against the Collyridians, an obscure sect of female heretics who paid Divine honours to the Blessed Virgin, towards the close of the fourth century. His argument is, that since the Blessed Virgin was well known to be the daughter of S. Joachim and S. Anne, she was a *human being*, and therefore not to be honoured with the honour due to God alone.² The

¹ The Festival of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary on September 8th, and of her "Dormitio" on August 15th, are noted by the Trullan Council (A.D. 692). They appear in the Gelasian Sacramentary, but the Nativity was observed in the East much earlier, if we may adduce the testimony of a sermon of S. Proclus of Constantinople, A.D. 440.

² S. Epiphanius wrote against the Antidicomarianites, who dishonoured the Blessed Virgin as some modern Protestants do (*Hær.* 78). He also wrote against the Collyridians, who used "collyrides," which were sacrificial cakes, as a sacrifice to the Blessed Virgin offered by

scientific historian does not necessarily reject a tradition as untrue because it comes to us from the fourth century.

The words of S. Epiphanius appeal to a fact which he evidently considers to be the common property of Christendom. He represents the local tradition of Palestine, and may also have derived his knowledge from previous writers.

The fact that certain of their writings are termed "Apocryphal" does not necessarily invalidate their testimony to the parentage of the Blessed Virgin. Besides which, we may well believe that S. Epiphanius had access to authorities whose works, though at present lost to us, may yet possibly be recovered. It was a commonplace of theology, a few years ago, to say that the Letter of Innocent I. to Decentius was the first post-Apostolic reference to the Unction of the Sick.¹ The discovery of the "Prayer Book of Serapion" altered matters, and moved the reference to Unction from A.D. 416, the date of the letter to Decentius, to A.D. 350, the date of Bishop Serapion's book. It is therefore rash, in view of future

women. He says: "Εἰ ἀγγέλους προσκυνεῖσθαι οὐ θέλει, πόσω μᾶλλον τὴν ἀπὸ Ἀννης γεγεννημένην, τὴν ἐκ τοῦ Ἰωακείμ τῇ Ἀννᾷ δεδωρημένην" (*Hær.* 79, sec. 5). In the same chapter S. Epiphanius states that both of these heresies were equally harmful: "Ἰση γὰρ ἐπ' ἀμφοτέραις ταύταις ταῖς αἰρέσεσιν ἡ βλάβη· τῶν μὲν κατευτελιζόντων τὴν ἀγίαν Παρθένον τῶν δὲ πάλιν ὑπὲρ τὸ δέον δοξαζόντων."

We have already quoted his words which exalt her above the Cherubim and Seraphim, and he lays down the true doctrine, as against the Collyridian worship of the Blessed Virgin Mary with *latria*, and the Antidicomarianite dishonour of her Perpetual Virginity, in the words: "Ἐν τιμῇ ἔστω Μαρία· ὁ δὲ Πατήρ, καὶ Υἱός, καὶ ἅγιον Πνεῦμα προσκυνεῖσθω τὴν Μαρίαν μηδεὶς προσκυνεῖτο" (*Hær.* 79, sec. 7). The clear line drawn by S. Epiphanius has been the unvarying rule of the Church. It is significant that this question of excess or defect arose in the latter part of the fourth century, and it shows that the reverence due to the Blessed Virgin was firmly rooted in the mind of the Church.

¹ See *Bishop Forbes on Thirty-nine Articles*, p. 466.

possible discoveries, to state positively, as some Protestants have done, that the traditional parentage of the Blessed Virgin is absolutely unreliable. The most we can say of it is what S. Augustine said when Faustus the Manichæan used a corrupted copy of the "Protevangelium of S. James," or of one of its derivatives, to prove that Joachim was a Levite, so that the Blessed Virgin was not of David's line: "quia canonicum non est, non me constringit" (*Cont. Faust.* lib. xxiii. cap. 9).

The "Protevangelium of S. James,"¹ which is the earliest of the uncanonical Gospels, says nothing of the kind in its true text. It speaks of the Blessed Virgin as of David's line (chap. x.), and so do the narratives derived from it, which are the Latin "Pseudo-Matthew" and the "Gospel of the Nativity of Mary." "Pseudo-Matthew" (chap. i.) says that "Joachim took to wife Anna, of his own tribe, that is of the tribe of Judah, of the family of David." "The Gospel of the Nativity of Mary" (chap. i.) says that "the Blessed and glorious ever-Virgin Mary" was "sprung from the royal stock and family of David. Her father was named Joachim and her mother Anna."² This "Gospel of the Nativity of Mary" was subsequently incorporated in the *Legenda Aurea*.

¹ Zahn assigns the "Protevangelium" to the first ten years of the second century. Its account of the "Cave of the Nativity" and the Miraculous Birth of our Lord has, in substance, passed into the common belief of Christendom. Justin Martyr (A.D. 147) (*Dial.* 78) alludes to the "Cave," and Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.* vii. 16) gives the account of our Lord's miraculous birth, "*salva integritate Matris*" (A.D. 202). Lipsius takes a high view of its antiquity in his article on the "Apocryphal Gospels" in the *Dict. of Christian Biography*.

² Bishop Cosin (*Notes on B. C. P.*, p. 34) says of July 26th, *S. Anne*: "The Mother of our Blessed Lady, the Virgin Mary, mentioned by many ecclesiastical writers." He cites S. John Damasc. lib. iv. *De Fide Ortho.* cap. 14, "Ἰωακείμ τολύνην τὴν σεμνὴν τε καὶ ἀξέπαινον Ἀννὰν πρὸς γάμον ἠγάγετο." The Western Church keeps August 16th

We may take the "Protevangelium of S. James" as being the probable source of the tradition of S. Epiphanius. There is no valid reason for throwing doubt upon the main facts concerning the parentage and early years of the Blessed Virgin which it records, and which it handed on to the two narratives derived from it.¹ It is thought that S. Gregory of Nyssa had access to the original and uncorrupted form of the "Protevangelium" when he wrote as follows: "Let us first hear what is traditionally related of her (the Blessed Virgin Mary). I have heard a certain uncanonical story which relates that the father of the Virgin was a certain illustrious citizen, observing the law, and of great probity of life, who lived to an old age without

(formerly March 20th) in memory of S. Joachim, and July 26th in memory of S. Anne. The Eastern Church commemorates them both on September 9th, the day after the Festival of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which is kept by Westerns, Easterns, and Anglicans on September 8th. The Eastern Church has also a separate commemoration of S. Anne on July 25th. The omission of S. Joachim from the Sarum Kalendar is probably owing to the Festival of S. Cuthbert on March 20th displacing it. The figure of S. Anne is frequently represented in the Roman Catacombs. Justinian built a church in her honour at Constantinople about A.D. 550. In Christian art she is depicted with a book, teaching the Blessed Virgin Mary to read, and sometimes with a dove near her with a ring or crown in its beak.

¹ Modern scholars who debase historical science into an instrument for minimising, or denying, the supernatural facts of the Christian religion, have set the "Protevangelium" on a high pinnacle of authority. It was used by Mr. Conybeare in the *Guardian* of April 1st, 1903, to invalidate the Virgin-Birth because it omits in its account of the Annunciation S. Luke i. 34, forgetting that it says what is practically the same thing: "Shall I bring forth as every woman brings forth? And the Angel of the Lord said, *Not so, Mary*, etc. These scholars cannot have it *both ways*, and cannot complain if the authority of the "Protevangelium" is used as the origin of the common belief of the Church with regard to the parentage and early history of the Blessed Virgin Mary, even if there are reasons for denying its statements on other points.

children, as he had a barren wife. But according to the law special honour belonged to mothers, which was not accorded to barren wives. Wherefore she imitated what is written of the mother of Samuel; she approached the Holy of Holies, and supplicated God that she who had not broken the law might not be deprived of the benediction of the law. And she promised that if she became a mother she would dedicate the child to God. And when, having made her vow, she became the mother of a daughter, she called her Mary, that by this name she might testify that the child was a God-given gift of grace.¹ And when the child was grown up and weaned she led her to the Temple of God, and surrendered her there, and fully discharged her vow" (S. Greg. Nyss. (A.D. 372) *Oratio in d. natal. Christi*, *Opp.* iii. 346). We continue the history in the words of

Narrative of
the "Protevan-
gelium."

the "Protevan-
gelium" itself: "And the priest received her, and kissed her, and blessed her, saying, The Lord hath magnified thy name in all generations. In thee, on the last of the days, the Lord will manifest His Redemption to the House of Israel. And he set her down on the third step of the Altar, and she danced with her feet, and all the house of Israel loved her. And her parents went down marvelling, and praising the Lord God, because the child had not turned back. And Mary was in the Temple of the Lord as if she were a dove that dwelt there, and she received food from the hand of an

¹ The original text of this passage is as follows: "Ἐπειδὴν ἐτεχθη τὸ παιδίον, ὠνόμασε μὲν αὐτὴν Μαρίαν, ὥς ἂν καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐπωνυμίας τὸ θεόδοτον διασημανθῇ τῆς χάριτος." We find another interpretation in the Homily *de Laudibus Mariæ*, attributed to S. Epiphanius: "Ἡ Μαρία ἐρμηνεύεται κυρία, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐλπίς. Κυρίον γὰρ ἔτεκε τὴν ἐλπίδα τοῦ παντὸς κόσμου Χριστόν." S. Bernard says: "Loquemur pauco et super hoc nomine, quod interpretatum *Maris Stella* dicitur, et Matri Virgini valde convenienter aptatur. Ipsa namque aptissime sideri comparatur, quia sicut sine sui corruptione sidus suum emittit radium, sic absque sui læsione Virgo parturit filium" (Homil. ii.).

angel. And when she was fourteen years old there was held a council of the priests, saying, Behold, Mary has reached the age of fourteen years in the Temple of the Lord. What then, shall we do with her? And they said to the high priest: Thou standest by the Altar of the Lord; go in and pray concerning her, and whatever the Lord shall manifest unto thee, that we will also do. And the high priest went in, taking the robe with the twelve bells into the Holy of Holies, and he prayed concerning her. And, behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, saying unto him, Zacharias, go out and assemble the widowers of the people, and let each bring his rod, and to whomsoever the Lord will show a sign, his wife shall she be. And the heralds went out through all the circuit of Judæa, and Joseph, throwing away his axe, went to meet them; and when they had assembled they went away to the high priest, taking with them their rods. And he, taking the rods of all of them, entered into the Temple and prayed, and having ended his prayer, he took the rods and came out, and gave them to them: but there was no sign in them, and Joseph took his rod last; and behold, a dove came out of the rod, and flew upon Joseph's head. And the priest said to Joseph, Thou hast been chosen by lot to take into thy keeping the Virgin of the Lord. But Joseph refused. . . . And the priest said unto Joseph, Fear the Lord thy God, and remember what the Lord did to Dathan, and Abiram, and Korah, how the earth opened and they were swallowed up because of their contradiction. . . . And Joseph was in fear, and took her into his keeping. And Joseph said to Mary: Behold, I have received thee from the Temple of the Lord, and now I leave thee in my house, and go away to build my buildings, and I shall come to thee. The Lord will protect thee" ("Protevangelium," chap. vii.—ix.).

At this stage we continue the narrative of the Annunciation and the Nativity from the Gospels of S. Matthew and

S. Luke.¹ But the canonical narrative receives illustration and illumination from the universal tradition of the Church regarding the birth and early years of the Blessed Virgin which is derived from the "Protevangeli-um." Protestant scholars are ready enough to receive uncanonical "Sayings" of our Blessed Lord.

The canonical Narrative is illustrated by tradition.

¹ The Koran contains certain traditions of the parentage of the Blessed Virgin, the Annunciation, and Nativity, which Mahomet must have derived from current Christian traditions. Mahomet said that many men had arrived at perfection, but only four women, of whom one was Mary, the mother of Jesus. In a former note we have quoted the prayer of Anna from the Koran, and the remarkable notes upon it of the Mussulman commentators. In sura iii. the story relates the birth of S. John Baptist, with no important variation from the Gospel narrative, and then says that Zacharias had the charge of the child Mary in the Temple. "And the angel said, O Mary, verily God hath chosen thee, and hath purified thee, and hath chosen thee above all women of the world. . . . O Mary, verily God sendeth thee good tidings that thou shalt bear the Word, proceeding from Himself. His Name shall be Christ Jesus, the Son of Mary. . . . He shall speak unto men in His cradle, and He shall be one of the righteous." She answered, Lord, how shall I have a Son, seeing a man hath not touched me? The Angel said, So God createth that which He pleaseth. When He createth a thing He only saith unto it, *Be*, and it *is*." In sura xix. (which is called *Miriam*), the child speaks from His cradle, "Verily, I am the Servant of God," whereby Mahomet denies, by implication, that our Lord was more than a Prophet. In sura lxvi. it is written of Mary that "she preserved her virginity, and unto her we breathed of our Spirit, ordaining her and her Son for a sign unto all creatures." The scene of our Lord's birth is placed "near a palm tree," and the Blessed Virgin is sustained by the dates that fall from the tree, and by water from a miraculous rivulet (sura xix.).

Notwithstanding its general tendencies, the article in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible* has the following comment on the exaltation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Koran: "It has been suggested that the Koran had an object in magnifying S. Mary, and that this was to insinuate that the Son was of no other nature than the Mother. But this does not appear to be the case. Mahomet seems merely to have written down what had come to his ears about her, without definite theological purpose or inquiry."

Surely those traditions of the "Protevangelium" in its earliest form (A.D. 210), which have been The "Logia," generally received by the Church, are just as worthy of credence as the "Logia," which are dated a little later.¹

The tradition that S. Joseph was a man of mature age, to whom was committed the charge of the Blessed Virgin, so that her hidden and consecrated virginity should be guarded by the protection of his name, when she became the moral and physical instrument of the Incarnation, seems to be demanded by the Gospel narrative. The tradition of his death, before our Lord entered upon His public ministry, seems the only reasonable and simple explanation of the fact that our Lord committed His Blessed Mother to the care of S. John in His Third Word from the Cross.

Tradition of
S. Joseph's
age and death.

The tradition of the Blessed Virgin's childhood, spent in the service of God, and of her self-dedicated virginity,² is in consonance with the account of the Annunciation which S. Luke must have derived from her, directly or indirectly, in the opening chapter of his Gospel. Her

Twofold pre-
paration of
the Blessed
Virgin Mary
for her
vocation.

preparation for her vocation was twofold. First, her sinless childhood, with its growth in grace, whereby she unconsciously fulfilled in her own person the "Præparatio Evangelica," as the fair flower of Abraham's seed, the King's daughter of David's royal line,³ and the Heiress of the Ages, predestined by

¹ The "Logia" were published in 1897 from a papyrus found at the ancient Egyptian Christian centre, Oxyrhynchus. The utmost antiquity claimed for them is between about A.D. 220 and A.D. 300.

² S. Augustine says: "Annuntianti Angelo Maria respondit: *Quomodo fiet istud, quoniam virum non cognosco?* quod profecto non diceret, nisi prius se virginem Deo vovisset" (*De Sanct. Virg.* cap. 4).

³ "Electa Virgo de semine Abraham, et radice Iesse" (S. Leo M. Sermon. xxix.).

"Cum autem evidenter dicat Apostolus Paulus ex semine David

The Blessed Virgin

Almighty God to be the Woman whose Seed should bruise the Serpent's Head. And then, by the virtue of that original righteousness which possessed her soul as the perfect firstfruits of Redeeming Love, she consciously dedicated herself to God. "In prayer and medita-

Bishop Hall on
her dedicated
virginity.

tion she had learned of a closer spiritual fellowship with God, and for this she had risen above the great ambition of Jewish women, to be, at least, in the line of the Messiah's maternal ancestry. Mary had risen above that; she had foregone that great hope; she looked for *a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters* (Isa. lvi. 5); she had consecrated herself wholly to God that she might wait upon Him without distraction. And *because* she had foregone that great hope, *because* she had responded to a higher call, and sought a deeper spiritual grace, God gives her the other blessing also: she shall be the Virgin Mother of the Messiah, of God's own Incarnate Son!"¹

We may trace in her consecrated virginity not only God's purpose fulfilled in her, as the second Eve, but the Wisdom of God in concealing the Incarnation from the Prince of this world. There are distinct affinities between Persian and Manichæan Dualism, and the Puritan conception of the mental and spiritual powers of Satan. His knowledge is considered to be beyond that of Angels unfallen, to whose inherent knowledge the Incarnation was a mystery unfathomable.² But Catholic theology ascribes no such knowledge to Satan.³

Her virginity
concealed the
Incarnation
from Satan.

secundum carnem Christum, ipsam quoque Mariam de stirpe David aliquam consanguinitatem duxisse dubitare utique non debemus" (S. Aug. *de Cons. Evan.* ii. c. 2).

¹ *The Virgin Mother*, by Bishop Hall of Vermont, p. 31.

² 1 Pet. i. 12.

³ "And under the plain teaching of Christ and His Apostles, there stands out a clear conception of a potentate of evil, who appears in the

He knew that the Seed of the Woman would crush his power; but he did not know *who* the Woman was, or *when* the predestined Seed would be born. The prophecy of Isaiah that “*The Virgin*” shall be with child, and—still *the Virgin* (*virgo pariens*)—“shall bring forth a Son,”¹ would be as unintelligible to him as it was to Trypho the Jew,² and to the modern commentators who emulate Trypho in perverting Isaiah’s prophecy, and imagining that it is only capable of an interpretation limited to the immediate occasion of its utterance.³

S. Ignatius of Antioch (A.D. 106) tells us that “the Virginity of Mary, her Child-bearing, as well as the Death of the Lord, were hidden from the Prince of this world—three Mysteries to be cried aloud—the which were wrought in the Silence of God”

S. Ignatius on
the Three
Mysteries
hidden from
Satan.

(Καὶ ἔλαθεν τὸν ἄρχοντα τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου ἡ παρθενία Μαρίας, καὶ ὁ τοκετὸς αὐτῆς, ὁμοίως καὶ ὁ θάνατος τοῦ Κυρίου· τρία μυστήρια κραυγῆς, ἅτινα ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ Θεοῦ ἐπράχθη) (Eph. xix.). Bishop Lightfoot’s note on this passage says: “The idea that the Deceiver was himself deceived by God’s mysterious reserve is found in many connections in the early Fathers.”⁴

first book of Holy Scripture as well as in the last; now described by this significant designation, now by that; of whom we learn that, while of great power, he is in no sense of a co-ordinate power with God, neither omnipotent, omniscient, nor omnipresent, but yet with a terrible faculty of turning to evil, and ultimate destruction, those who are heirs of salvation” (Canon Newbolt, *Religion*, p. 130).

¹ Isa. vii. 14.

² Justin Martyr, *Dial. Tryph.* chap. lxvii., where Trypho substitutes *veānis* for *παρθένος* in the text of the LXX. to confute the Catholic interpretation.

³ Dr. Robertson Smith’s *Commentary on Isaiah* forms an honourable exception amongst modern commentaries of the “Higher Criticism” type in dealing with this passage.

⁴ Bishop Lightfoot quotes Justin Martyr in Iren. v. 26: “Σατανᾶς . . . μηδέπω εἰδὼς αὐτοῦ τὴν κατάκρισιν.” Hippol. *Op.* p. 38: “Ἰδοὺ ὁ Κύριος παραγένηται . . . ἐνδυμα ἔχων τὸ ἀνθρώπινον σῶμα, κρύπτων δὲ τὸ τῆς

We may note here that S. Ignatius places the *three Mysteries* that were hidden from Satan on the *same level*. The mystery of the Virgin-Conception, the mystery of the Virgin-Birth, and the Mystery of the Cross and Passion are alike wrought "in the silence of God." We shall consider

this point more fully later on. It is enough here to note that the Virgin-Birth was no less a mystery than the Virgin-Conception, and that those who accept the fact that our Lord "was

conceived by the Holy Ghost" cannot logically believe that the words "born of the Virgin Mary" do not veil a mystery equally supernatural and insoluble by the light of human reason. To imagine, with the foreign Protestant Divines and Puritans, that one of the three Mysteries of S. Ignatius was no *mystery* at all, but an ordinary human birth, is

contrary to the whole *consensus* of the Catholic Church in its interpretation of the Gospel narrative of the Nativity. Besides which there is a close connection between this naturalistic view of our Lord's birth and the heresy of Cerinthus, who denied that He was conceived by the Holy Ghost. To suppose that a natural and non-miraculous birth could be the result and consequence of a supernatural and miraculous conception is illogical, and the modern revival of the heresy of Cerinthus is its logical outcome.

To deal directly with the revival of this heresy in our own times does not fall within the scope of this book. The modern denial of the "Virgin-Birth" of our Lord, by

Θεότρητος ἀξίωμα, ἵνα λάθῃ τοῦ δράκοντος τὸ πανούργημα." S. Ambrose on S. Luke i. 27 (*Op.* i. p. 1281) says: "Ut virginitas Mariæ falleret principem mundi." The same truth is clear enough from 1 Cor. ii. 7, 8: "Sed loquimur Dei sapientiam in mysterio quæ abscondita est, . . . quam nemo principum huius sæculi cognovit; si enim cognovissent, nunquam Dominum gloriæ crucifixissent." The Crucifixion was the ruin of the power of the Prince of this World. Satan would have stopped it if he had known what its issues would be.

which phrase His Immaculate *Conception* "by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary" is apparently meant, is a heresy which has been quite recently refuted by well-known English scholars and divines.¹

The entire argument of the next chapter of this book constitutes its *indirect* refutation. The whole tone and temper of our modern Cerinthians is so abhorrent to the writer that he prefers to escape from their company, as S. John is said to have done when he chanced to meet Cerinthus himself.² In fact, it may be truly said that Cerinthus was more honest than those of his modern followers who hold benefices in the Church of England, and repeat, in public, Creeds whose statements they openly deny. When they add to this stain of dishonour the hypocritical excuse that their denial of the "Virgin-Birth" is meant to make the doctrine of the Incarnation more acceptable to the "cultured thought" of the day,³ they resemble the courtly Arians of the fifth century

¹ Dr. Randolph's short essay on "The Virgin Birth of our Lord" is one of the most useful of the modern refutations of this heresy, and Dr. Swete's *Apostles' Creed* (pp. 42-55) gives a most convincing and thorough exposition of the Catholic doctrine of the Creed on this subject.

² "Καὶ εἰσὶν οἱ ἀκηροῦτες αὐτοῦ (i.e. S. Polycarp) ὅτι Ἰωάννης, ὁ τοῦ Κυρίου μαθητὴς, ἐν τῇ Ἐφέσῳ πορευθεὶς λούσασθαι, καὶ ἰδὼν Ἐσω Κήρυθον, ἐξήλατο τοῦ βαλανείου μὴ λουσάμενος, ἀλλ' ἐπειπὼν· Φύγωμεν, μὴ καὶ τὸ βαλανεῖον συμπέσῃ, ἔνθεν ὅστις Κηρίνθου, τοῦ τῆς ἀληθείας ἐχθροῦ" (S. Irenæus *adv. Hæc.* iii. 3).

³ The modern tendency to deny the possibility of miracles is absolutely anti-Christian. Catholics can make no terms with this development of "modern thought" without denying the fundamental truths of "the Faith once delivered to the Saints." The anti-Christian temper of modern Cerinthianism tends to violate all the laws of unbiassed historical investigation. Dr. Swete, the Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, has well said of the critical methods of these modern heretics: "It is too commonly assumed that evidence which would be good under ordinary circumstances is bad where the supernatural is involved" (*Church Congress Report*, 1902, p. 163). The denial of the miracles of the Virgin-Conception and the Virgin-Birth is *ipso facto* a denial of the Catholic doctrine of the Incarnation.

who read their own heretical interpretation into the Creeds with impunity, because the State hindered the discipline of the Church.¹ We may close this brief mention of a most distasteful subject with some admirable remarks of that Father Benson veteran theologian, Father Benson: "Occa-
on the Virgin Birth. sionally one may read in modern literature the suggestion that no one could vouch for this truth, no one but the Blessed Virgin herself could be its guarantee. On the contrary, the whole of Christianity vouches for the truth of this Article. It needs no human authority. Take it away, and the Divine Life of Christianity is gone. The triumph of Christianity could not be what it is if Jesus Christ were the child of a human father. Its Divine Power involves the Divine Person of its Founder, and the Divine Personality of the Child excludes the possibility of any human agent co-operating in the Birth. . . . Although, therefore, our Lord was born amidst the relationships of earth in His life of humiliation, He took upon Himself the common humanity of all nations. He is the Seed of the collective humanity, the Seed of the Woman, in the Virgin power of humanity untainted by any individualising corruption of personal parentage, conceived by the Holy Ghost of the most pure elements of human blood in the Womb of the Blessed Virgin, the Mother of God. Christ's Virgin-Birth makes His Humanity Catholic in power. There is nothing in any race of man which He does not share as the Son of Man. His Virgin-Birth makes His Humanity no less Catholic in its demand. . . . The most savage and degraded nations have some elements of human nature

¹ It must in fairness be noted that the action taken by Bishop Gore of Worcester, against the Rev. C. E. Beeby, a beneficed Priest of his diocese, who publicly denied the "Virgin-Birth," has somewhat purified the atmosphere of the Church of England. The firm action of the Bishop was an example greatly needed by his episcopal brethren, and the manner in which Mr. Beeby met it by his resignation was a tardy concession of straightforwardness.

which makes them what they are. They are not only capable of being restored in Christ, but their restoration is essential to the integrity of Christ's glorified humanity, because the virginal Humanity which He has assumed comprises all those elements which have been derived from the original humanity of Adam, our common father. It is . . . in virtue of the Virgin-Birth that Christ is fitted to be Head over all things to the Church gathered out of all nations of the world" (*The Virgin-Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ the Foundation of the Christian Religion*. By R. M. Benson, M.A., pp. 2, 35-39).

We may now resume the canonical narrative of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and dwell upon certain of its salient facts. The first point to be noted is the exact significance of her espousal to S. Joseph. If, after the Annunciation, she abode three months with her kinswoman Elisabeth,¹ and returned to him, and was then for the first time brought to his home with the usual rites of a Jewish bride, the name of Joseph would not have sufficed to protect her from false tongues. But if the Blessed Virgin was received into S. Joseph's house as a bride, immediately before the Annunciation, his protection would avail to shield her "Virgin-Conception" from the knowledge or questionings of evil spirits or evil men.

The uncanonical story, already quoted, which says that S. Joseph, after receiving her from the Temple as his espoused bride, took her to his house, seems to harmonise with the canonical narrative.

¹ Her relationship to Elisabeth was probably on the mother's side, as S. Thomas Aquinas thinks. "B. Virgo erat de stirpe sacerdotali ex parte matris, quod patet ex hoc quod Elisabeth, quæ erat de filiabus Aaron dicitur eius cognata." He adds that the argument of Heb. vii. on our Lord's Priesthood after the order of Melchisedek would be invalidated if this relationship were not "ex parte matris" (IV. *Dist.* XXX. Q. ii. Art. 1).

When the Blessed Virgin returned from her sojourn with Elisabeth, the Angel of the "Vision-Annunciation" to S. Joseph calls her his *wife* (Matt. i. 20).¹ In the preceding verse he is called her "husband." The words "before they came together," and "fear not to take unto thee," can be explained by the light of the uncanonical tradition. She had been taken to his house as his wife, and he had been compelled to leave her to accomplish some piece of work at some distance from Nazareth. His absence would be regarded as the ostensible cause of her visit to Elisabeth, and on her return the sorrows and trial of S. Joseph began, which were relieved by the angel of the Lord appearing unto him in a dream. The significance of "espoused" both in S. Matthew and S. Luke appears to be that she was the virgin bride of a holy and just man, himself, according to S. Jerome and S. Augustine, a chaste celibate,² and thereby fitted by God to be the guardian

¹ "Unde et angelus vocat Mariam coniugem Ioseph, dicens ad Ioseph (Matt. i. 20) *Noli timere accipere Mariam coniugem tuam; quod exponens Augustinus (in lib. i. De Nupt. etc. c. xi.) dicit: Coniux vocatur ex prima desponsationis fide, quam concubitu nec cognoverat, nec fuerat cogniturus*" (S. Thom. *Summa* III. Q. xxix. Art. 2). S. Thomas shows at length that the marriage of the Blessed Virgin with S. Joseph was *verum matrimonium*, since it was based upon consent, and quotes S. Augustine (*De Consens. Evan.* II. c. i.): "*etiam servata pari consensu continentia, posse permanere vocarique coniugium,*" etc.

² Concerning the celibate chastity of S. Joseph, we find S. Jerome saying: "Si enim in virum sanctum fornicatio non cadit, *et aliam eum uxorem habuisse non scribitur*, Mariæ autem custos potius fuit quam maritus, relinquitur eum virginem mansisse cum Maria, qui pater Domini meruit appellari" (*Adv. Helvid.* c. 12). S. Augustine says: "Habe ergo Ioseph, cum Maria coniuge tua, communem virginitatem membrorum, quia de virgineis membris virtus nascitur angelorum. Sit Maria Mater Christi in carne sua virginitate servata: sis autem et tu pater Christi cura castitatis et honorificentia virginitatis . . . Gaude, Ioseph, virginitate Mariæ, qui solus meruisti virginealem affectum possidere coniugii; quia per meritum virginitatis ita separatus es a concubitu uxoris, ut pater dicaris Salvatoris" (*Serm. xiv. de Nativ.*).

of her dedicated virginity.¹ This sense of “espoused” (rather than the meaning implying one “betrothed” but not “married”) seems demanded by the word being used of the Blessed Virgin in S. Luke ii. 5,² as she journeys to Bethlehem, immediately before our Lord’s Birth.

We have already dealt with the manifestation of her virginity in her reply to the Angelic Salutation. The Blessed Virgin did not, like Zacharias, question the message and ask for a sign to prove its truth. She doubted not the truth of the Angel’s words, but in her humble faith asked only how God would fulfil in her person the mysterious words of Isaiah, “Behold, *the Virgin* shall conceive.”³ She believed in faith and confidence, absolute and perfect, that God would fulfil His Purpose and enable her to abide by her vow of virginity at the same time. Her pure spirit was in such close touch and harmony with the Spirit of God that she was ready to receive the further words of the Archangel Gabriel with a sublime trustfulness which finds no parallel

¹ The remarks of Cornelius à Lapide *in loc.* are well worth careful perusal. He takes substantially the same view of the Blessed Virgin’s marriage as is set forth above. S. Ambrose (on S. Luke i. 27) takes the same view. He says: “Cur autem non antequam desponsaretur impleta est? . . . Maluit autem Dominus aliquos de suo ortu, quam de Matris pudore dubitare.”

² The same Greek word is used for “espoused” in every place: *μνηστευθείσης*, S. Matt. i. 18; *μεμνηστευμένην*, S. Luke i. 27; *μεμνηστευμένην*, S. Luke ii. 5. With regard to S. Joseph’s celibacy, it may be remarked that “Mary the mother of James and Joses” was beside the Cross. If these “brethren of our Lord” were sons of S. Joseph by a former wife, as S. Epiphanius suggests, their mother must have been the divorced wife of S. Joseph, *still living at the time of the Crucifixion*. This Mary also was the sister of the Blessed Virgin. It is incredible that S. Joseph should have divorced the *sister* of the Blessed Virgin to marry her. So Bishop Wordsworth, *in loc.*

³ S. Bernard says: “Non dubitat de *facto*, sed modum requirit et *ordinem*; neque enim querit an fiet istud, sed quomodo” (*Hom. iv. sup. Missus est*).

The Blessed Virgin

in human history. Her will was moulded by grace into such absolute conformity with the Divine Will that she

Her absolute self-surrender. surrendered her whole being, body, soul, and spirit, to fulfil God's purpose. *Ecce, ancilla*

Domini, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it unto me according to Thy Word." We see in this absolute self-surrender of the Blessed Virgin the fruits of her predestination and her redemption from all sin. Her consent to

become the Ever Virgin, Mother of God was part of God's Eternal Purpose, whereby she became the *moral* as well as the *physical* instrument of the Incarnation.

Her sinless consent would have involved no bitter environment in a world unfallen. But it was encompassed with the consequences of the Fall in every direction, because perfect innocence and spotless purity such as she possessed could not be expected to escape (save by Divine interposition) the perplexed suspicions of that judgment which S. Joseph would be constrained to pass upon the visible tokens of a mystery as yet unrevealed to him. All this she knew, and realised to the full, when she submitted her own will to the Will of God. She would have to bear this terrible burden of sorrow alone. She could not reveal the Angel's message to S. Joseph. Who would believe it, even if it were right for her to attempt to reveal the mystery of the Incarnate Life that was being wrought out within her in the silence of God? It was not for her to break that silence till God should open her lips to speak. She believed that God would make *her righteousness as clear as the light*. Her sublime and magnificent venture of faith placed her first in the Kingdom of her Divine Son as the most perfect and glorious of all the souls redeemed by His grace.¹ It is rare to find a Protestant writer who realises

¹ S. Athanasius, in a remarkable passage, says that our Lord's Incarnation sanctified and consecrated the body of the Blessed Virgin by His

this venture of faith ; but Godet's words are worth quoting.

Godet on the self-surrender of the Blessed Virgin.

He says: "It only remained for Mary to consent to the consequences of the Divine offer.

She gives this consent in a word at once simple and sublime, which involved the most extraordinary act of faith that a woman ever consented to accomplish. She accepts the sacrifice of that which is dearer to a maiden than her very life, "and thereby becomes pre-eminently the heroine, the ideal daughter of Zion, *the perfect type of human receptivity* in regard to the Divine work" (*Comm. on S. Luke, in loc.*). We leave the details of the exegesis of the events recorded in S. Matthew and S. Luke with regard to the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Nativity, the Presentation, and their spiritual and devotional application, to other interpreters.¹ The typical and allegorical interpretations of the Fathers, such as the application to the Blessed Virgin of the type of the "Burning Bush," and the "Ark of the Covenant," will be readily traceable and will repay thoughtful study.

It is impossible to do more than touch upon some salient points which indicate the position of the Blessed Virgin in the economy of redemption. We have now dealt with two of those points, and their consequences.

Two salient points : the virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and her submission to the Will of God in their effects and consequences.

(i) The sinless purity of her dedicated virginity, the witness of Christianity as a whole to the necessity of the Virgin-Birth of the Second Adam, and the manner in which the Virgin-Conception and the

being at once Man of her substance and God the Son: "Καὶ τὸ θανμαστὸν τοῦτο ἦν, ὅτι καὶ ὡς ἄνθρωπος ἐπολιτεύετο, καὶ ὡς Λόγος τὰ πάντα ἐξωγοῦναι, καὶ ὡς Υἱὸς τῷ Πατρὶ συνῆν. Ὅθεν οὐδὲ τῆς Παρθένου τικτούσης ἐπασχεν αὐτός, οὐδὲ ἐν σώματι ὦν ἐμολύνετο, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον καὶ τὸ σῶμα (*i.e.* of the Blessed Virgin Mary) ἡγίαζεν" (*De Incarn. c. 17*).

¹ We would add Didon's *Jesus Christ*, and Edersheim's *Jesus the Messiah*, to the modern books already mentioned.

Virgin-Birth of our Lord were wrought "in the silence of God" for the defeat of Satan.

(ii) The predestination of the Blessed Virgin, as the second Eve, to be the *moral* instrument of the Incarnation by the perfect submission of her human will to the Will and Purpose of God, whereby she became (in Godet's words) "the perfect type of human receptivity in regard to the Divine Work."

As we are considering the Saints in glory, as well as the Blessed Virgin, it seems fitting in this place to say somewhat of S. Joseph, who certainly is to be regarded as second only to her in the Kingdom of God. Although the Blessed Virgin was of David's royal line, it is his genealogy that is first recorded in the Gospels, and our Lord's ancestry would be reckoned through him, rather than through her, in accordance with Jewish custom.¹ S. Joseph has been accorded a place in the reverential thought of the Catholic Church from the beginning; but in the days of Cerinthian and Ebionite heresy it was not prudent to lay overmuch stress on the honour due to this most eminent saint of God. Occasion might thereby have been given for heretics to consider him to be our Lord's father by *nature*, as he was by *office*, as the guardian and head of the Holy Family of Nazareth, during that period when our Lord "increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man" (S. Luke ii. 52).

¹ S. Augustine answers as follows those who objected to the descent of our Lord being reckoned through Joseph: "Non, iniquiunt per *Ioseph* debuit. Quare non? Numquid non erat *maritus* Mariæ? Scriptura enim dicit, 'Noli timere accipere Mariam *coniugem* tuam: quod enim in illa natum est de Spiritu Sancto est.' Et tamen paterna ei non auferitur auctoritas, cum iubetur puero nomen imponere; denique et ipsa Virgo Maria, bene sibi conscia quod non ex eius complexu et concubitu conceperit Christum, tamen eum patrem Christi dicit" (*Serm.* ii. 16).

It would have been imprudent for the Catholic Church, at the time of the Nicene Council, to pay special honour to the Carpenter of Nazareth, when the question of questions was concerning the true Godhead of Him Who was called the "Carpenter's Son."

The Council period of the Church had first of all to settle and stablish the Catholic Faith with regard to our Lord's Person and Incarnate Life. When that series of questions was settled, there was room for subsidiary questions, and thus the reverence due to the Blessed Virgin fell into its rightful and orderly place in Catholic life and thought; and subsequently it became safe for the Church to pay S. Joseph the honour due to him. "There were Saints nearer to our Lord than either Martyrs and Apostles, but as if these had been lost in the effulgence of His glory, and because they were not manifested in external works separate from Him, it happened that for a long while they were less thought of. . . . S. Joseph furnishes the most striking instance of this remark. . . . Who, from his prerogatives, and the testimony on which they come to us, had a greater claim to receive an early recognition among the faithful? A saint of Scripture, the foster-father of our Lord,¹ was an object of the universal and absolute faith of the Christian world from the first, yet the devotion to him is comparatively of late date."²

The view here taken is quoted as affording an explanation differing in a measure from that adopted by the writer.

¹ S. Cyril of Jerusalem says: "In the same way that Mary was mother of John, on account of her love for him (*φιλοστοργίαν*), and not because she gave him birth, so Joseph was called the father of Jesus" (*Catech.* vii. 9).

² Newman's *Letter to Pusey*, p. 33. We may note that some modern devotions to S. Joseph would fall under the Cardinal's previously cited condemnation of exaggerations.

We see in S. Joseph an example of obedience to the Will of God second only in its completeness to that of the Blessed Virgin herself. S. Irenæus speaks of his joyful obedience to the message of the Angel concerning the Blessed Virgin, and also with regard to the whole nurture and bringing up of the Christ.¹ The whole of S. Joseph's life, as revealed to us in Holy Writ, is a life of prompt and faithful obedience. In this obedience he is *δικαιος* (*iustus*),² fitted to be the head of the holy home of Nazareth. We find him obedient to the law of God, as he knew it, in his sore anguish of doubt and perplexity. His one thought was to obey, thinking only of her whom he had vowed to shield and guard from evil. The Angel tells him what to do, and his faithful obedience once more shines forth as he receives his "Annunciation" message.

Once more his obedience to "the powers that be" leads him to the fulfilment of prophecy. He takes the Blessed Virgin to Bethlehem with all care and tenderness, and Christ is born in the Cave of the Manger. He is obedient to the law, in the circumcising of the Holy Child, and he gives to Him the saving Name as he was bidden by the Angel. He obeys in presenting the Holy Child in the Temple, and is rewarded by seeing the faithfulness of holy Anna, and by hearing Simeon's *Nunc Dimittis*. With unquestioning obedience he leaves home and friends at the Angel's bidding to take the toilsome journey into Egypt, and there remains in a strange land the faithful and unwearied guardian of the Holy Mother and Child until the Angel once more bids him return. Once more he obeys

¹ S. Iren. *adv. Hær.* lib. iv. c. 23 : "Joseph et Mariam accepit, et in reliqua universa educatione Christi gaudens obsequium præstitit." The early date of S. Irenæus (A.D. 130) gives special value to his testimony.

² "Sæpe in N.T. ubi aliquis *δικαιος* dicitur, plures omnino virtutes comprehendi solent" (Vorst. *de Hebr.* p. 56).

the Angel, and goes to Nazareth instead of venturing into Judæa. He goes up year by year to the Temple at Jerusalem, until that time when the Holy Child, manifest in His Father's House, and even after this, subject unto him and His Blessed Mother, needs his care no more.

The death of S. Joseph. Before our Lord's earthly ministry began he had passed away, to be surely claimed by our Lord, and received into glory, when He appeared in the abode of the holy dead as the herald of His own victory.

The perfect obedience and faithfulness of S. Joseph were wrought by the Redeeming Love of the Holy Child Whom he trained and guarded, and by the abiding grace of the Holy Spirit of God. The sanctification of S. Joseph. The man who was chosen of God to rule and govern the lowly home of Nazareth, which was for thirty years the earthly abode of Immanuel, where God Almighty "tabernacled" amongst men, must himself have possessed a sanctity like that of S. John Baptist, second only to the holiness of the Blessed Virgin herself. The Eternal Word Incarnate obeyed S. Joseph as well as His Blessed Mother. The wisdom of God must have guided and sanctified S. Joseph with singular gifts of grace, to fit him to be the Foster-Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and the husband of the Ever Virgin Θεοτόκος. When we think of the resurrection of the Saints which accompanied our Lord's Resurrection (S. Matt. xxvii. 52),¹ our minds are naturally led to think of S. Joseph as one of that blessed company. If Simeon, Anna, and S. John Baptist, as the link between the Old

¹ The famous John Gerson, Chancellor of Paris, and one of the leaders of the Council of Constance (A.D. 1418), expounds Heb. xi. 35: "Acceperunt mulieres de resurrectione mortuos suos" of the Blessed Virgin receiving, not only the Risen Christ, but also "her most chaste spouse S. Joseph," when the Saints arose as S. Matthew relates in this verse. It is a probable opinion, and we, at all events, find the verse interpreted of a literal resurrection by S. Ignatius (*Ad Magn.* ix.) as follows: "παρὼν ἡγείρεν αὐτοὺς ἐκ νεκρῶν." Bishop Lightfoot's note

and the New Covenants, with certain eminent Saints of the Old Covenant, may fitly be numbered with that company in our thoughts, we may also think that S. Joseph would most assuredly be first amongst the blessed dead to rejoice in our Lord's victory over death, and rise with Him to glory.

It is at this stage in our inquiry that we may most fitly touch upon the relations between our Lord and the Blessed Virgin during His public ministry. His work on earth severed Him, for the time being, from the home of Nazareth, and this temporary severance, even from His mother,¹ was part of His self-sacrifice, and the beginning of her sorrows.

Cardinal Newman has expressed this truth of the Gospel with his usual accuracy of thought : " I observe, then, that when our Lord commenced His ministry, and during it, as one of His chief self-sacrifices, He separated Himself from all ties of earth in order to fulfil the typical idea of a teacher and priest ; and to give an example to His priests after Him ; and especially to manifest by this action the cardinal truth as expressed by the Prophet, '*I am, I am the Lord, and there is no Saviour beside Me.*' To this separation, even from His Mother,

refers the words to our Lord's *descensus ad inferos*, as well as to S. Matt. xxvii. 52, but this interpretation does not invalidate the testimony of S. Ignatius to the literal interpretation of the text, as against modern rationalising, such as Dr. Farrar's.

¹ S. Augustine's comment upon the words of our Lord to His Mother at the Miracle of Cana is very clear and plain. He says : "*Nec nos ad negandam Christi matrem cogit quod ab eo dictum est, Quid mihi et tibi est, mulier? nondum venit hora mea. Sed admonet potius ut intelligamus secundum Deum non habuisse matrem, cuius maiestatis personam parabat ostendere aquam in vinum vertendo. Quod autem crucifixus est, secundum hominem crucifixus est : et illa erat hora, quæ nondum venerat, quando dictum est, Mihi et tibi quid est? nondum venit hora mea, id est, qua te cognoscam. Tunc enim ut homo crucifixus cognovit hominem matrem, et dilectissimo discipulo humanissime commendavit*" (*De Fide et Symbolo*, c. ix.).

He refers by anticipation at twelve years old in His words, ‘*How is it that you sought Me? What, did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?*’ This separation from her with whom He had lived thirty years and more was not to last beyond the time of His ministry. She seems to have been surprised when she first heard of it, for S. Luke says, on occasion of his staying at the Temple, ‘*They understood not the word that He spoke to them.*’ Nay, she seems hardly to have understood it at the marriage feast; but He, in dwelling on it more distinctly then, implied also that it was not to last long. He said, ‘*Woman, what have I to do with thee? My hour is not yet come*’—the hour of His triumph when His Mother was to take her predestined place in his Kingdom.¹ . . . Accordingly S. Augustine thinks that that hour had come when on the Cross He said ‘*Consummatum est,*’ and after this ceremonial estrangement of some years² He recognised His Mother, and committed her to the Beloved Disciple. Thus by marking out

¹ A thoughtful Presbyterian writer is in accord with Cardinal Newman with regard to our Lord’s words at Cana. “His answer was kindly and respectful, but it marked a certain change in the relation between Jesus and His Mother. Hitherto He had been a private person, with no obligations save to her—ready to hear her advice—willing to give way to her. Now He was the Anointed of God, with the charge of a high work upon Him—for which He could take no directions save from God” (Dr. Watson, *The Life of the Master*, p. 92).

S. Augustine’s authority supports this view: “Non repellens de qua suscepit carnem, sed suam tunc maximi insinuans divinitatem, quæ divinitas illam etiam fœminam fecerat, non in illa facta erat” (*De Consens. Evan.* iv. c. 10).

² We may refer to this *temporary* separation from His Mother our Lord’s words in S. Matthew xii. 48-50, and their parallel passages in S. Mark iii. 33-35 and S. Luke viii. 21. The words *Who is My Mother and who are My brethren?* have been interpreted by some Protestants as implying a slight upon the Blessed Virgin, and the curious comment of S. Chrysostom *in loc.* gives them an excuse for their interpretation. But two Lutherans, Bengel and Stier, strike

the beginning and end of the period of exception, when she could not exert her influence upon Him, He signifies more clearly, by the contrast, that her presence with Him and her power was to be the rule. In a higher sense than He spoke to the Apostles, He seems to address her in the words: '*Because I have spoken these things sorrow hath filled your heart. But I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man shall take from you*'"¹ (*Letter to Pusey*, pp. 145, 146).

a truer note. Bengel says, "Non spernit Matrem sed anteponit Patrem." The passage is a parallel to His words, "*How is it that ye sought Me?*" and must be similarly interpreted. Stier interprets the words of our Lord's relation to the *whole of redeemed humanity as the Man*, not *a man* bound solely to the family ties of Nazareth. He says, "Brother, sister, and Mother: these words define the compass and limits of the relationship of the Son of God and Man with the human race."

¹ The Fathers differ from S. Chrysostom's view of S. Matt. xii. 48-50. They treat the passage in the same way as they deal with S. Luke xi. 27, "Blessed is the womb that bare Thee," etc., *μενοῦν γε (imo vero) yes, indeed—but* "blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it." So Dean Alford. S. Augustine says, "Beatior percipiendo fidem Christi, quam concipiendo carnem Christi" (*De Sanct. Virg.* c. 3). The Blessed Virgin's faith and her response to the Divine Will, in a word, her personal sanctification, raised her to a loftier eminence in Christian thought than her Divine Maternity considered as a fact apart, as the woman in the crowd evidently considered it. S. Jerome interprets S. Matt. xii. 48 as a stratagem of a plotter to see if He would prefer to speak to His Mother and kinsmen rather than continue His immediate spiritual work (*Comm. in Matt. in loco*). S. Augustine expounds it of the whole company of the redeemed in personal kinship with our Lord. "The whole Church is His Mother, because she it is who brings forth His members. He then sets forth the Blessed Virgin as the type of the Church, and uses the passage to show that she is *spiritually* Mother of the members of Christ, as she was *corporally* "*Mother of the Head Himself*" (*De Sanct. Virg.* c. 6).

See also S. Aug. *in Ioan.* tr. x. n. 3; S. Ambrose, *Expos. in Luc.* vi. 36.

These carefully weighed words help us to form a true judgment upon the place of the Blessed Virgin in the economy of redemption.

The usual line of thought adopted by Protestant divines of various schools is to exclude the Mother of The Protestant view. "Jesus Christ, our Lord and God" from any special relation either to Him or to us. To them, as a body, the Blessed Virgin is merely the physical instrument of the Incarnation. They refuse, as a whole, to recognise her moral and spiritual share in the mystery of "the Word made flesh." She is an ordinary Jewish maiden, who is used by God for a certain purpose, and then becomes an ordinary Jewish wife and mother of a family. When she has, in an ordinary and natural way, discharged her function of maternity, God has no further to do with her more than with any other good woman. She is placed by Protestants on a level with her kinswoman Elisabeth, with Anna, Martha and Mary of Bethany.¹ Protestant writers have said that our Lord's committal of her to the care of S. John at the Cross involved her complete withdrawal from any special reverential consideration on the part of Christians in general, and marked the final effacement of her unique relation to our Lord. Protestants have been known to

¹ The Bishop of London spoke as follows in the Upper House of Convocation on May 5th, 1904: "Whenever he tried to carry out what he believed to be the real practice of the Church of England with regard to the honour shown to the Virgin Mary, without allowing that honour to go to a higher degree than the Church of England believed to be right, he was instantly met by a large body of opinion, which showed that there were persons in the Church who were not sound on the doctrine of the Incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ. He did not think that it was possible at this moment to over-estimate the anxiety which was felt in this country with regard to what had been said concerning the Virgin Birth of our Lord." The Bishop thus distinctly traces the revived heresy of Cerinthus to defective views of the Incarnation which have resulted from Protestant denial of the honour due to the Blessed Virgin.

push this heresy so far as to object to the words "Jesus, son of Mary," in a well-known hymn. But this Heretical tendencies of the Protestant view. deliberate effacement of the ties which for ever bind our Lord to His Mother and His Saints is a dangerous perversion of Christianity.¹

Our Lord, as the Second Adam, is the Representative Man, and His Virgin Conception and Virgin Birth, as Father Benson observed, "makes His Humanity Catholic in power." But we cannot venture to dissociate His Humanity from the setting in which He willed to place it. To attempt, as some Protestants have attempted, to contemplate our Lord's Humanity as isolated from His Blessed Mother, from S. Joseph, and from the rest of the Company of Heaven, is to preach a Gospel which is not His. To attempt to put a period to our Blessed Lord's love for His Mother and His Saints, and to say that a time came in the history of our Lord when His Mother became no more to Him than any other woman who believed in Him, and that His love was to be spread abroad amongst the Company of the Redeemed, so that all should be on an equality and none should be pre-eminent above the rest, is a conception of Christianity fraught with false issues. The cold logic of Protestantism strives thus to isolate our Lord at its peril. Human nature is too much for it, and a dangerous heresy creeps in which makes our Lord the centre of subjective prayers and hymns, which virtually put Him in the place which He destined His Mother and the Saints to occupy; and Protestantism, half unconsciously, erects for its worship a semi-Arian Christ, Who moves for them in an entirely different spiritual plane from that of God the Father.

And then the neglect of the Blessed Virgin carries with

¹ This perverted and unwarrantable opinion has actually been published by an Anglican writer upon the "Seven Words from the Cross." His name carries no weight and is better left unmentioned.

it the obscuring of her office as the Θεοτόκος. The Nestorian tendency of popular Protestantism is only too evident, and its unbalanced teaching upon our Lord's Humanity has caused the revival of the Kenotic heresy, which Luther engrafted upon the Protestant Reformation.

The ordinary Protestant view of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints is tainted *ab initio* with conscious or unconscious heresy regarding our Lord's Person and Work.

We turn now from views partial, defective, and heretical to the witness of the Primitive Church.

As the Guardian and Keeper of Holy Writ, the Catholic Church, from the earliest ages, has seen the present, the past, and the future in the dealings of God with the Serpent, the Woman, and the Man. In the first Adam *all die*, but the Woman's Seed shall bruise the Serpent's head. The Seed of the Woman is the Second Adam—the Incarnate Christ—in Whom *all shall be made alive*. The Woman is the Second Eve, the Virgin Mother of the Second Adam, whom all generations shall call blessed, because she bears the same relation to redeemed humanity that the First Eve does to fallen humanity.

Once more in the closing volume of Holy Writ we see the Serpent, the Woman, and the Man. S. John in vision sees the Second Eve bringing forth the Second Adam, "Who shall rule the nations with a rod of iron," and persecuted by the enmity of the Serpent.¹ We shall examine this last passage at more length in a subsequent chapter. We take first the testimony of ante-Nicene writers.

S. Justin (A.D. 120—165) says: "For Eve, being a Virgin and undefiled, conceiving the word which was from the Serpent, brought forth disobedience and death; but the Virgin Mary, taking faith and joy, when

¹ Rev. xii. 1-8.

the Angel Gabriel told her the glad tidings, that the Spirit of the Lord should come upon her . . . answered, 'Be it unto me according to Thy word.'"¹

S. Irenæus (A.D. 130—200) says: "With a fitness Mary the Virgin is found obedient, saying, 'Behold Thy handmaid, O Lord; be it unto me according to Thy word.' But Eve is found disobedient; since she obeyed not, whilst still a virgin. As she, having Adam indeed for a husband, though still a virgin—through being disobedient, became the cause of death both to herself and and to the whole human race. Whereas Mary, having a husband fore-appointed, and yet a virgin, by being obedient became the cause of salvation, both to herself and to the whole human race. . . . And so the knot of Eve's disobedience received its unloosing through the obedience of Mary. For what the virgin Eve bound by her unbelief, that the Virgin Mary unloosed by her faith."²

Tertullian (A.D. 160—240) says: "Into Eve, as yet a virgin, had crept the word which was the framer of death. Equally into a virgin was to be introduced the Word of God which was the builder up of life; that what by that sex had gone into perdition, by the same sex

¹ "Παρθένος γὰρ οὖσα Εἰσα καὶ ἄφθορος τὸν λόγον τὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄψεως συλλαβοῦσα, παρακοὴν καὶ θάνατον ἔτεκε· πίστιν δὲ καὶ χαρὰν λαβοῦσα Μαρία ἡ Παρθένος, εὐαγγελιζομένου αὐτῇ Γαβριὴλ ἀγγέλου, ὅτι Πνεῦμα Κυρίου ἐπ' αὐτὴν ἐπελεύσεται . . . ἀπεκρίνατο, Γένειτό μοι κατὰ τὸ ῥῆμά σου" (*Τρυφή*, c. 100).

² "Consequenter autem et Maria Virgo obediens invenitur, dicens, Ecce ancilla tua, Domine, fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum. Eva vero inobediens: non obedivit enim, adhuc quum esset virgo. Quemadmodum illa, virum quidem habens Adam, virgo tamen adhuc existens . . . inobediens facta, et sibi et universo genere humano causa facta est mortis: sic et Maria, habens prædestinatum virum, et tamen virgo, obediens, et sibi et universo generi humano causa facta est salutis. . . . Sic autem et Evæ inobedientiæ nodus solutionem accepit per obedientiam Mariæ. Quod enim alligavit virgo Eva per incredulitatem, hoc Virgo Maria solvit per fidem" (S. Iren. *contr. Hæc.* iii. 22).

might be brought back to salvation. Eve had believed the Serpent; Mary believed Gabriel; the fault which the one committed by believing, the other by believing has blotted out.”¹

These three passages are widely representative. Tertullian represents the earliest form of Latin Christianity, S. Justin represents the tradition of Jerusalem and Palestine, and S. Irenæus links together the East and the West by bringing the Johannine tradition of Asia Minor into Gaul. All of them represent the Blessed Virgin as morally and spiritually the handmaid of the Incarnation, and not merely its physical instrument. Eve’s disobedience, as a moral failure, is contrasted with the perfect obedience of the Blessed Virgin as the Second Eve. As Eve is a minister of ruin to all men, so the Blessed Virgin is a minister of salvation to all, in her co-operation with God’s Eternal Purpose in becoming incarnate by means of her perfect and sinless submission to His Will.

We may add further testimonies from post-Nicene Fathers to the doctrine of the Blessed Virgin as the Second Eve.

S. Cyril of Jerusalem (A.D. 315—386) says: “Since through Eve, a Virgin, came death, it behoved that through a Virgin, or rather from a Virgin, should life appear; that as the Serpent had deceived the one, so to the other Gabriel might bring good tidings.”²

¹ “In virginem enim adhuc Evam irrepserat verbum ædificatorium mortis. In Virginem æque introducendum erat Dei verbum extructorium vitæ; ut quod per eiusmodi sexum abierat in perditionem, per eundem sexum redigeretur in salutem. Crediderat Eva serpenti; credidit Maria Gabrieli; quod illa credendo deliquit, hæc credendo delevit” (Tert. *de Carn. Chr.* c. 17).

² “Διὰ παρθένου τῆς Εὔας ἦλθεν ὁ θάνατος, ἔδει διὰ παρθένου, μᾶλλον δὲ ἐκ παρθένου, φανῆναι τὴν ζωὴν· ἵνα ὥσπερ ἐκείνην ὄφεις ἡπάτησεν, οὕτως καὶ ταύτην Γαβριὴλ εὐαγγελισθῇ” (Cat. xii. 15).

S. Epiphanius (A.D. 320—400) says : “ She it is who is signified by *Eve*,—receiving, figuratively, the name of the Mother of all living. It is a marvel that, after the Fall, she had this great title given to her. And, according to our material nature, the whole race of men upon earth was born from this Eve ; but in truth it is from Mary that the Life itself is born into the world so that Mary might bring forth the Living One, and become the *Mother of all living*. Thus, then, Mary is called mystically the *Mother of all living*. . . . There is, moreover, something else wonderful to contemplate concerning these women—Eve and Mary. Eve became a cause of death to mankind—Mary a cause of life, . . . that instead of death there might be life excluding that death which came from a woman—namely, He Who, again by means of a woman, has become to us Life.”¹

This passage of S. Epiphanius is very remarkable in its clearness of exposition. The contrast between Eve, “the Mother of all living”—the Mother of fallen humanity, as sharing her fall ; and the Blessed Virgin, the Second Eve—“the Mother of all living” who are redeemed in the Second Adam, is brought out in strong relief.

S. Jerome (A.D. 331—420) writes, at a somewhat later date, in language which shows that the doctrine of the Blessed Virgin as the Second Eve had passed

¹ “ Αὐτὴ ἐστὶν ἡ παρὰ μὲν τῇ Εὐᾷ σημαιομένη δι’ αἰνίγματος λαβοῦσα τὸ καλεῖσθαι μήτηρ ζώντων . . . καὶ ἦν θαῦμα ὅτι μετὰ τὴν παράβασιν ταύτην τὴν μεγάλην ἔσχευ ἐπωνυμίαν. Καὶ κατὰ μὲν τὸ αἰσθητόν, ἀπ’ ἐκείνης τῆς Εὐᾶς πᾶσα τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἡ γέννησις ἐπὶ γῆς γεγέννηται· ὧδε δὲ ἀληθῶς ἀπὸ Μαρίας αὐτὴ ἡ ζωὴ τῷ κόσμῳ γεγέννηται· ἵνα ζῶντα γεννήσῃ, καὶ γέννηται ἡ Μαρία μήτηρ ζώντων δι’ αἰνίγματος οὖν ἡ Μαρία μήτηρ ζώντων κέκληται. Ἄλλὰ καὶ ἕτερον περὶ τούτων διανοεῖσθαι ἐστὶ θαυμαστόν, περὶ δὲ τῆς Εὐᾶς καὶ τῆς Μαρίας· ἡ μὲν γὰρ Εὐᾶ πρόφασις γεγέννηται θανάτου τοῖς ἀνθρώποις . . . ἡ δὲ Μαρία πρόφασις ζωῆς . . . ἵνα ζωὴ ἀντὶ θανάτου γέννηται, ἐκκλείσασα τὸν θάνατον τὸν ἐκ γυναικὸς, πάλιν ὁ διὰ γυναικὸς ἡμῖν ζωὴ γεγεννημένος” (*Hæc*. lxxviii. 18),

into the theology of the Church as an axiom of Catholic belief. He says, "Death by Eve, life by Mary" (*Mors per Evam, vita per Mariam*) (*Ep.* 22, *ad Eustochium*, 21).

S. Augustine, the greatest of Western doctors (A.D. 354—430), uses almost the same phrase as S. Jerome, and further says: "It is a great sacrament (or *mystery*) that since by woman came death to us, so to us was born by woman Life; that in the case of either sex, namely, the feminine and the masculine, the conquered Devil should be tormented, since he was rejoicing upon the overthrow of both sexes; seeing that his punishment would have been small if both sexes had been liberated in us, without our being liberated in both."¹

This remarkable passage shows that, in the opinion of S. Augustine, the action of our Lord's Redeeming Love upon His Blessed Mother in causing her Immunity from sin was a victory over Satan which placed her, as the Second Eve, in a special relation with all the company of the redeemed, by virtue of her sinlessness as well as of her Child-Bearing.² S. Paul, in 1 Tim. ii. 15, brings this Child-Bearing of the Blessed Virgin into direct relation with

¹ "Huc accedit magnum sacramentum, ut, quoniam per feminam nobis mors accederat vita nobis per feminam nasceretur: ut de utraque natura, id est, feminina et masculina, victus diabolus cruciaretur, quoniam de ambarum subversione lætabitur, cui parum fuerat ad pœnam si ambæ naturæ in nobis liberarentur, nisi etiam per ambas liberaremur" (*De Agone Christi*, c. 24). He also says: "*Diabolus per serpentem Evæ locutus per Evæ aures mundo intulit mortem; Deus per Angelum ad Mariam protulit verbum, et cunctis sæculis vitam effudit*" (*Serm. xv. de Temp.*).

² S. Augustine has a similar passage in his Anti-Pelagian Treatise on "Original Sin": "Sic itaque in damnatione hominem prima nativitas tenet, unde nisi secunda non liberat. Tenet ergo Diabolus, liberat Christus; tenet deceptor Evæ, liberat filius Mariæ; tenet qui per coniugem venit ad virum, liberat Qui de coniuge natus est, quæ non pertulit virum; tenet qui causam libidinis intulit feminæ, liberat Qui sine libidine est conceptus in femina" (*De Peccat. Origin.* cap. xl.).

the redemption of womankind, and the restoration διὰ τῆς
 ΤΕΚΝΟΓΟΝΙΑΣ of that which woman had lost in Eve. Bishop

The Child-
 Bearing as
 interpreted
 by Bishop
 Wordsworth.

Wordsworth of Lincoln says on this verse :

“Here was comfort indeed ; that womankind
 should be saved even by that very thing which
 had been pronounced to be the means of her

chastisement—namely, by *child-bearing* ; that she should
 be saved through *the child-bearing*, that is, through the
 blessed Child-Bearing of the promised seed of the *Woman*,
 the Second Adam, Christ Jesus, conceived by the Holy
 Ghost—the Child of the Virgin Mother. Thus where
 sin and sorrow abounded, grace and joy much more abound ;
 thus woman is restored in Christ to her blessed position as
 the helpmate of man, and she who, in the hands of Satan,
 had been made the means of death to all, is made by God’s
 overruling Love to be the means of endless life to all in
 Christ” (*Epp. of S. Paul*, p. 444).

Bishop Wordsworth’s well-known bias against Roman
 doctrine gives his testimony to the Catholic teaching
 concerning the Blessed Virgin as the Second Eve a special
 value of its own. His interpretation of

Bishop Ellicott.

the passage is adopted, on scientific critical
 principles, by Bishop Ellicott in his well-known Com-
 mentary on the Pastoral Epistles. There are many other
 patristic references to the Blessed Virgin as the Second
 Eve which cannot be included for lack of space.¹ The
 Fathers who have been already quoted may, however,
 be taken to represent the mind of the whole Primitive
 Church.

¹ We may cite, amongst others, S. Ambrose (*De Instit. Virg.* 79-81,
 and *Serm.* 45, c. 2-5) ; Zeno of Verona (lib. i. tract. ii. 9) ; S. Chrys-
 ostom (*Expos. in Psal. xlv.*) ; S. Peter Chrysologus (*Serm.* 68,
Patr. Lat. Migne, t. 52, p. 641) ; Severianus (*Orat. vi. de Mundi*
Creatione). The Caroline Divines taught the primitive doctrine that
 the Blessed Virgin was the Second Eve. It needs reviving by our
 modern preachers.

The patristic teaching on the Blessed Virgin as the Second Eve is necessarily linked with her title of Θεοτόκος. The Council of Ephesus (A.D. 431) stamped this august title of the Blessed Virgin with oecumenical authority, although the word Θεοτόκος is not found in Scripture any more than the Nicene ὁμοούσιος. The *facts*, however, which both these words so aptly and tersely express, rest upon the infallible basis of Scripture as interpreted by the living voice of the Church. It is not necessary to enter into the Nestorian controversy further than to say that the Nestorian Christ is not "the Word made flesh," but a deified man with a human personality ; and that the title Θεοτόκος guards the essential truth of the Incarnation, which is that He Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Blessed Virgin was Very and Eternal God from the first instant of His miraculous conception.

The title Θεοτόκος, as expressing the fact that the Second Eve was the Mother of the Second Adam, Who is God the Son from all eternity, thus clearly marks the distinction between His Eternal Generation as Son of God, and His temporal generation as Son of Mary. It is almost needless to add, for the benefit of our modern Nestorianisers, that the title "Mother of God" refers solely to our Lord's temporal nativity, and not to His Eternal Generation. But certain Protestants write of this title as if "Mother of God"¹ meant "Mother of the Godhead." The Reformation is responsible for the confusion of many men's minds upon the most simple and fundamental truths of the Catholic Faith. It has prevented many modern Anglicans from doing justice to the position of the Blessed Virgin in the

¹ The title was not coined during the Nestorian controversy. It had been used as far back as Origen, and since him by many others and those of high authority in the Church. Cf. S. Cyril of Jerusalem (*Catech.* x. 9), and Origen (*Roult, Rel. sac.* ii. 332).—(Eck, *Incarnation*, p. 270).

economy of redemption. As Bishop Forbes says: "They
 Bishop have shrunk from looking the doctrine con-
 A. Forbes. cerning her fairly in the face. They have
 not allowed their minds to dwell on the incomparable
 singularity, on the incommunicable prerogative of Divine
 Maternity. While they freely dwell on the gifts of God in
 other saints, they shrink from resting upon the sweet and
 holy images which surround the name of Mary. *This is in
 every way wrong.* A theology that is afraid of possible
 consequences is sure to err. We must state the absolute
 truth, and leave consequences to God. To eliminate from
 our moral theology the idea of the Blessed Virgin is to strip
 it of some of its most delicate bloom. What does not
 civilisation, what does not woman, owe to the sublime and
 tender conception of Mary, which has done more to tame
 the rude social life of Europe in the Middle Ages than any
 other one idea! And what more constraining motive to
 purity of soul, next of course to the thought of Him Who is
 the great Exemplar of all virtues, can there exist than the
 idea of such perfect spotless womanhood as a grateful
 Christendom recognises in our Lady!¹

"But there is a still more serious thought . . . There is
 a danger lest the shrinking from a due appreciation of the
 dignity of the Mother may not generate an imperfect belief in
 the Divine Personality of the Son, and no error is so deadly
 as that which seeks to touch the Person of Jesus. For just
 consider how much is bound up in the thought expressed

¹ Bishop Forbes has the authority of the present Anglican Prayer
 Book for applying the title "our Lady" to the Blessed Virgin Mary.
 In the Table of Lessons we find the Festival of the Annunciation
 described as the "Annunciation of our Lady." This phrase did not
 appear in the Books of 1549, or 1552, but it was inserted in the
 Elizabethan Prayer Book of 1559, and seems to have been a prelude
 to Archbishop Parker's restoration of the Minor Festivals of the
 Blessed Virgin Mary in 1561, which has already been noticed in the
 previous chapter.

in our Article, that *the Word took man's nature in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, of her substance*. It implies all those tremendous consequences that are involved in the term Θεοτόκος, *Mother of God*, a term asserted to be of apostolic tradition, certainly employed at a very early period in the Church, and endorsed by the sanction of a General Council. That term implies that Mary, not by the power of nature, but by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, brought forth in the flesh Christ, the True God, the Son of God by nature, so that she is just as truly and as properly Θεοτόκος, as Christ is truly and properly Θεός.¹ No wonder that the pious sentiment of Christendom in the contemplation of this stupendous dignity should have burst forth in finding paraphrases for this wondrous term, that it should awake to the conception of an ideal of female holiness, such as no mere human reason could attain unto. No wonder that poetry has strained her utmost to find words to describe the celestial glories of her whom all generations shall call 'Blessed,' or that the art of the limner and sculptor should have been taxed to the full to embody in external expression those marvellous combinations of lowliness and glory, of gentleness and power, of grace and strength, which attend on the idea of the creature-Mother of the Creator-Son" (Forbes *On Art.* II. pp. 31-33).

We find the Scriptural proof of the title Θεοτόκος in the words of Elisabeth's greeting to the Blessed Virgin. "Whence is this to me, ἵνα ἔλθῃ ἡ Authority for the title Θεοτόκος. μήτηρ τοῦ Κυρίου μου πρὸς μέ;" (ut veniat mater Domini mei ad me? (S. Luke i. 43).

¹ Bishop Forbes represents here the universal teaching of Anglican Post-Reformation theology. We may quote Archbishop Bramhall of Armagh (A.D. 1662) as a fair type of the Caroline Divines. He says: "The hypostatical union of the two natures, Divine and Human, in Christ is a fundamental truth; that the Blessed Virgin is *the Mother of God*—that Christ had a Divine and Human Will—are evident consequences of this truth" (*Works*, vol. ii. p. 90).

The Blessed Virgin

S. Gregory Nazianzen (A.D. 380) says that "If any one imagines Mary not to be Θεοτόκος, he has no part with God" (εἰ τις οὐ Θεοτόκον τὴν Μαρίαν ὑπολαμβάνει, χωρὶς ἐστὶ τῆς Θεότητος) (Greg. Naz. *ad Cledon.* Ep. i.).

Theodoret (A.D. 423), although representing the school of Antiochene theology which ultimately produced (ii) *Patristic.* Nestorianism, yet admits that "the most *ancient* (τῶν πάλαι καὶ πρόπαλαι) heralds of the orthodox Faith taught to name and believe the Mother of the Lord Θεοτόκον, according to the *Apostolical tradition*" (*Hær.* iv. 12).

The great Doctor of the Incarnation, S. Athanasius, who (iii) *Conciliar.* "engraved indelibly upon the imaginations of the faithful that man is God, and God is man—that in Mary they meet,"¹ uses the title Θεοτόκος as Origen and other third-century Fathers had used it before him.² The Council of Ephesus (A.D. 431) by accepting the following words of S. Cyril of Alexandria, gave œcumenical authority to the title Θεοτόκος. "For Scripture does not say that the Word united to Himself the *person* of a man, but that *He became flesh*. . . . This is the doctrine which an accurate faith sets everywhere in the first place. Thus

¹ Newman's *Letter to Pusey*, p. 93.

² Socrates (*Hist.* vii. 42) quotes Origen as using the title Θεοτόκος in his *Commentary on Romans*. Archbishop Alexander of Alexandria used it against Arius (*Ep. de Arian.* *Hær.* c. 12). We find the following use of Θεοτόκος by S. Athanasius in his orations against the Arians:—

"The Angel is sent from the Lord in the case of the Virgin Mother of God" (ἐπὶ τῆς Θεοτόκου Μαρίας) (*Or.* iii. c. 14).

"For us He took flesh of a Virgin, Mary, the Mother of God" (δι' ἡμᾶς σάρκα λαβὼν ἐκ Παρθένου τῆς Θεοτόκου Μαρίας) (*Or.* iii. 29).

"John the Baptist ἔτι κυφορούμενος ἐσκήρτησεν ἐν ἀγαλλιάσει ἐπὶ τῇ φωνῇ τῆς Θεοτόκου Μαρίας" (*Ib.* 33).

"The flesh (of our Lord) is born ἐκ τῆς Θεοτόκου Μαρίας" (*Ib.* 33).

"That which was spoken by the Archangel to the Mother of God herself shows the oneness of the Divine Word and Man" (τὸ πρὸς αὐτὴν τὴν Θεοτόκον πρὸς τοῦ ἀρχαγγέλου ῥηθὲν τὴν ἐνότητά τοῦ Θείου Λόγου καὶ ἀνθρώπου δείξει) (*Or.* iv. 32).

shall we find that the Holy Fathers thought. So did they make bold to call the Holy Virgin *the Mother of God*. Not as though the Nature of the Word, or His Godhead, had its beginning from the Holy Virgin, but forasmuch as His Holy Body, endued with a rational soul, was born of her, to which Body also the Word was united, on the basis of Personality, so He is said to be born after the flesh.”¹

The Fathers also saw in the Blessed Virgin a type of the Church. This idea occurs as early as the Epistle of the Churches of Lyons and Vienne (A.D. 177), where the Church is called the “Virgin Mother” rejoicing over her martyrs.²

We may now venture to set forth the relation of the Blessed Virgin to the Redemption wrought by our Lord. There is One only Redeemer, as there is One only Mediator between God and man. With S. Ambrose we say that “Jesus required no helper in the redemption of all men. He accepted the love of His Mother (*i.e.* at the Cross), but He did not seek the assistance of a human being.”³

¹ “Οὐ γὰρ εἴρηκεν ἡ γραφή, ὅτι ὁ Λόγος ἀνθρώπου πρόσωπον ἤνωσεν ἑαυτῷ, ἀλλ’ ὅτι ‘γέγονε σὰρξ’ . . . Τοῦτο πρεσβεῖει πανταχοῦ τῆς ἀκριβῶς πίστεως ὁ Λόγος. Οὕτως εὐρήσομεν τοὺς ἁγίους πεφρονηκότας πατέρας· οὕτω τεθαρσῆκασι ‘Θεοτόκον’ εἰπεῖν τὴν ἁγίαν Παρθένον· οὐχ ὡς τῆς τοῦ Λόγου φύσεως, ᾗτοι τῆς Θεότητος αὐτοῦ, τὴν ἀρχὴν τοῦ εἶναι λαβούσης ἐκ τῆς ἁγίας Παρθένου· ἀλλ’ ὡς γεννηθέντος ἐξ αὐτῆς τοῦ ἁγίου σώματος, ψυχωθέντος τε λογικῶς, ᾧ καὶ καθ’ ὑπόστασιν ἐνωθεὶς ὁ Λόγος, γεννηθῆναι λέγεται κατὰ σάρκα” (S. Cyril Alex. *ad Nest.* Ep. ii.).

² Eusebius, *H. E.* bk. v. 31.

³ “Non egebat adiutore ad omnium redemptionem. Suscepit quidam Matris affectum, sed non quæsitv hominis auxilium” (S. Ambrose, *Exp. Evang. Luc.* x. 132).

S. Jerome pictures her joy over the victory of the redeemed: “Go forth, I pray thee, a little while from prison, and picture to your eyes the recompense for present toil. What a day that will be when Mary, the Lord’s Mother, shall come to meet thee, attended with virgin choirs! When, after the Red Sea passed, and Pharaoh with his host drowned, Mary will lead the chant, to which they will make response,

The Blessed Virgin

But, just as the Blessed Virgin was the *moral* as well as the physical instrument of the Incarnation, by the submission of her will, so she consented to be "the Mother of Sorrows" at the Cross. She offered up her will throughout the whole course of our Lord's life, from His Birth to His Cross and Passion. She was "ancilla Domini" alike in the joyful mysteries and sorrowful mysteries of her life. Thus she had her share as the Second Eve, as the Θεοτόκος, and as the willing "ancilla Domini" in all the mysteries of Redemption.¹ At the Cross she was committed to S. John with the words "Behold thy mother!"

Her Mother-
hood of
redeemed
humanity.

We may look beyond the literal meaning of these words, and trace in their spiritual significance her Motherhood of redeemed humanity as the Second Eve, and the type of the Church. We cannot forget the beautiful lines :

Jesus, when His Three Hours were run,
Bequeathed thee from the Cross to me ;
And oh ! how can I love thy Son,
Sweet Mother, if I love not Thee ?

Sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider hath He cast into the sea !" (S. Jer. Ep. xii. ad Eustoch.).

¹ An accurate and careful modern German writer says that the Blessed Virgin's part in Redemption is that she is the pure Mother of Redeemed Humanity, by linking mankind with Heaven as the Θεοτόκος, destroying by her seed the power of the Serpent, and being the type of the Redeeming Church.

"Maria hat, als Mutter des Erlöses, einen gewissen Antheil am Erlösungswerke, denn sie ist,

"(i) Die zweite Stammutter der Menschheit, die reine Stammutter der erlösten Menschheit ;

"(ii) Sie verbindet die Menschen mit dem Himmel, indem sie Gott gebiert ;

"(iii) Sie zertritt die Schlange den Kopf und zerstört damit die Macht des Feindes der Erlösung.

"Sie ist Vorbild der Kirche, der von Christus gestifteten Erlösungsanstalt" (Dr. F. A. von Lehner, *Die Marienverehrung in den ersten Jahrhunderten*, p. 181).

Her office is that of perpetual intercession for the Church Militant. It cannot clash with the unique prerogatives of her Redeemer and ours. "Mary is only our adopted Mother, given us from the Cross; her presence is above, not on earth; her office is external, not within us. Her name is not heard in the administration of the Sacraments. It is her prayers that avail, and they are effectual by the *fiat* of Him Who is our all in all. Nor does she hear us by any innate power, or any personal gift; but by His manifestation to her of the prayers which we make her. When Moses was on the Mount, the Almighty told him of the idolatry of his people at the foot of it, in order that he might intercede for them; and thus it is the Divine Presence which is the intermediating power by which we reach her, and she reaches us" (Newman's *Letter to Pusey*, pp. 89, 90).

We may turn from the Cardinal's words to those of a revered Anglican divine who was almost the last survivor of the Tractarians. Some years ago Canon Carter of Clewer wrote as follows: "You ask me what I believe to be the truth about devotion to the Blessed Virgin, and I am glad to tell you what has been the result of my own studies on this important point. We look, as you know, to the great Fathers of the early centuries as the truest interpreters of the law of God, and as witnesses beyond all others as to what the Early Church believed. They are clear as to their belief. They speak of the glory of her purity, of her great vocation, as the chosen Mother of God,¹ our Saviour, the Eve of the new Kingdom,

¹ "The Virgin and Child is *not* a mere modern idea; on the contrary, it is represented again and again in the paintings of the Catacombs. Mary is there drawn with the Divine Infant on her lap, she with hands extended in prayer, He with His hand in the attitude of blessing. . . . Cavaliere de Rossi . . . has given us from the Catacombs various representations of the Virgin and Child. The latest of these belong to the early part of the fourth century, but the earliest

and of her great example to us. We cannot but believe, and have hope in her intercession being offered for us, hers especially, with those of the other blessed Saints herself the chief. And we may surely ask her intercessions trusting in God to hear us" (*Life and Letters of T. T. Carter*, p. 252).

We may add the testimony of Dr. Pusey, the great theologian of the Tractarian revival. "She was Dr. Pusey. Mother of our Redeemer, and so from her, as the fountain of His Human Birth, came all which He did, and was, and is to us. She, being the Mother of Him Who is our Life, became the Mother of Life; she was *the Gate of Paradise*, because she bore Him Who restored to us our lost Paradise; she was *the Gate of Heaven*, because He, born of her, opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers: she was *the all undefiled Mother of Holiness*, because the Holy One, born of her, was called the Son of God; she was *the Light-clad Mother of Light*, because He Who indwelt her and was born of her, was the True Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.¹ And he believes to be referable to the very age of the Apostles" (Newman's *Letter to Pusey*, p. 59).

Dr. F. A. von Lehner, to whose scholarly and accurate work we have previously referred, gives eighty-five careful engravings from the paintings of the Roman Catacombs, and from early Christian sculptures. The oldest are from the Catacomb of Priscilla, and Dr. von Lehner has given a full account of the whole eighty-five representations in his *Marienverehrung* (pp. 286-342). Most are of the Virgin and Child, in some the Blessed Virgin Mary appears with Apostles or Saints. The mind of the Primitive Church, with regard to the Divine Motherhood and its relations to redeemed humanity, is clearly expressed in these early memorials of Christian Art. These crude expressions of the relation of Christendom to the Virgin and Child find their culmination in the Sistine Madonna of Raphael, which is the very highest representation of the devotional spirit of Christianity. To attempt to present Christianity to the world apart from the sacred associations which are eternally linked to the central idea of the Virgin and Child, is to rob the Incarnation of its poetry, its tenderness, its love, and its reality.

¹ Pusey's *Lenten Sermons*, p. 126.

where is she? What has been cannot cease to be. She who was the Mother of God-Man here must be His Mother still. Little it were to be Queen of Angels. *The* special bliss must be the special love of the human Mother and the Divine Son.”¹ And again he says: “Who is she, on whom those Divine eyes, radiant with His Godhead, which survey all things in Heaven and on earth, must rest with an especial love, with the love of a Son to His Mother? What must be the love and humility of the highest being in the Heavenly Hierarchy, whether it be S. Michael, or any of the Seraphim, belonging to those ranks which never fell, that he adores the condescension of God, not only in taking into Himself our nature, but in placing nearest to Himself—the God-Man—His purely human Mother, above himself, above every possible creature? For, grand and magnificent and highly endowed as may be any the highest creature which God could create *none could have the nearness of her, the Mother of God.*”²

“Plainly we could not love too much her from whom Jesus vouchsafed to receive a mother’s care, who loved Him the All-Holy, and *her Redeemer too*, as no other mother could love her son, whom He loved with a Divine, but also with Deified human love; love with which no other son could love his mother. The love of the Mother and Son were essentially different from all other love, because He was her Son after the Flesh, but also Almighty God. And that same love must continue on now, only that her God-enabled power of love in the Beatific Vision of His Godhead must be unspeakably intensified.”³

The name of Dr. Pusey still carries weight amongst Anglicans at the present day, and so his burning words of love and reverence to the Blessed Virgin express far better

¹ Pusey’s *Lenten Sermons*, p. 127.

² Dr. Pusey, *Eleven Addresses*, p. 26.

³ *Eirenicon*, pt. ii. p. 412.

The Blessed Virgin

than those of any other Anglican theologian the true teaching which has been so widely forgotten, even by those amongst us who call themselves Catholics.¹

We close our quotations with yet another passage from Bishop A. Dr. Pusey's great disciple, Bishop Forbes. Forbes. "Of course between the perfection of God, and the perfection of the noblest of His creatures, there is the gulph of infinity fixed . . . But on the other hand, viewed rightly, and in the analogy of faith, the great honour bestowed on Mary, the recognition of her place in the order of grace, tends very directly to a proper estimate of the Glory of God. As in Alpine scenes one can never estimate the vast distances and enormous magnitudes of the glorious objects by which we are surrounded, from the fact that we have no measure or power of comparison till we see some tree or human form, the comparative insignificance of which forms that measure, so it is with the infinitude of God. We ascend towards it through the contemplation of the Saints. Take the Virgin as the highest of them all, estimate her pure as Eve at the moment of her creation, add to that the miraculous fact of Divine Maternity, exhaust all thought and all positive language in the conception and expression of her august prerogatives, and yet, when you have reached the height, God is still infinitely greater. Thus she becomes a height of created nature, whence to rise to the Divine Humanity of her Son, and thence to the infinitude of God, and the higher ideal we have of her, the more complete is our all imperfect estimate of Him. Christ is the glorious sun of righteousness, shining in His strength, glorious and

¹ Dr. Pusey caught the spirit of the Caroline Divines. So sturdy an opponent of Papal supremacy as Dr. Isaac Barrow spoke of the Blessed Virgin as "*splendid in spiritual endowments*." Again he says: "*Born of Mary*. Mary, I say, a Princess by blood and progeny, and extracted from the most illustrious stem on earth, not only famous amongst men, but (which is infinitely more) most dear to God" (*Works*, vol. vi. p. 488-490).

radiant, from Whose heat nothing is hidden ; and He shines all the more gloriously and radiantly by reason of, and by comparison with, those derived fires, the Saints who shine in the firmament as the stars of Heaven, and specially with her whom an imaginative and poetic Christianity, playing upon a fancied interpretation of her lovely name, has designated as '*the Star of the Sea.*'"¹

We may briefly summarise the points emphasised in this

chapter as follows :—
 Summary of conclusions.

(i) The Blessed Virgin in her relation towards God is the predestinated moral and physical instrument of the Incarnation, the fulfilment of the Divine purpose in the union of the Godhead with sinless humanity, and the consummation of the "Præparatio Evangelica" as the Θεοτόκος : (1) in her sinless purity of body and soul ; (2) in her dedicated Virginity ; (3) in her submission to the Will of God, as the "ancilla Domini," in the joyful and sorrowful mysteries of Redemption.

(ii) In her relation towards man she is the Second Eve, and, as the Mother of the Redeemer, Who knits her to us by the common bond of redemption, she is the Mother of redeemed humanity ; and therefore is the first of all created intercessors, whose prayers avail with God, through Jesus Christ, the One Mediator. As the highest of all created beings, and nearest to God as the chosen Θεοτόκος, she is the first object of our love and reverence, next to her Divine Son, in the economy of Redemption.

¹ Forbes, *Thirty-Nine Articles*, pp. 226, 227.

CHAPTER III.

THE PERPETUAL VIRGINITY OF THE BLESSED Θεοτόκος.

“Virgo concipiens, Virgo pariens, Virgo moriens” (S. AUGUSTINE
de Catech. c. 40).

THE words of S. Augustine which head this chapter not only represent the teaching of the Catholic Church, anterior to the division which parted Eastern from Western Christendom, but they form the most natural and convenient order for treating the subject of the Perpetual Virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

(a) *Virgo Concipiens.*

The Immaculate Conception of our Blessed Lord, from the undefiled substance of the Virgin Mary His Mother, by the Power of the Holy Ghost, is a truth which is indissolubly bound up with the Catholic doctrine of the Incarnation.¹ It does not fall within the scope of these pages to argue with a certain development of modern Cerinthianism which claims to have invented for itself a doctrine of the Incarnation which denies our Lord's Virgin-Conception and Virgin-Birth, and believes Him to be the Son of Joseph and Mary by natural generation. Such a view of our Lord's Conception and Birth is self

¹ “There are no believers in the Incarnation discoverable who are not believers in the Virgin-Birth,” under which term the writer includes the “Virgin-Conception” (Bishop Gore, *Dissertations*, p. 48).

refuted by the fact that, even if its advocates admit that our Lord was freed from original sin *before* His Birth, as the majority of Christians believe His Mother to have been, it would rob the Incarnation of its essential efficacy as a new departure for the human race, and destroy the central truth that, by virtue of His miraculous Conception, our Lord is the Second Adam, Whose Personality resides in His Godhead, and *not* in His Manhood.

If our Lord had been born of human parents, by the ordinary process of generation, He would have inherited from them a human personality.¹ He would have been a man, and not *the* Man, Who represents the whole human race in the Divine Personality of God the Son, as Father Benson's lucid reasoning, quoted in the previous chapter, clearly proves.

We are dealing solely with the Catholic doctrine of the Incarnation, which *demand*s, as an integral part of its divinely revealed verity, the Virgin-Conception and the Virgin-Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. We state the Catholic Faith concerning the Incarnation as revealed in the Bible and the Church, which has been held *semper, ubique, et ab omnibus*, and we leave to others the duty of arguing with heretics and unbelievers.

The Virgin-Conception of our Blessed Lord is a miracle which transcends all human powers of explanation. A miracle may be defined as the orderly operation of a higher law of God, of whose working we know nothing, within the sphere normally occupied by a lower law of God, with the working of which

¹ Writing of the obscure teaching of one of these modern heretics, the late Bishop Westcott remarked: "He seems to me to deny the Virgin-Birth. In other words, he makes the Lord a man, one man in the race, and not the new Man—the Son of Man, in whom the race is gathered up. To put the thought in another and a technical form, he makes the Lord's personality *human*, which is, I think, a fatal error" (*Life of Bishop Westcott*, vol. ii. p. 308).

The Virgin-Conception of our Lord is a miracle.

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we are familiar by virtue of our powers of observation and reasoning. The method whereby God from all eternity purposed to bring about the Incarnation was a law in the Mind of God, which could not be limited in its operation by the ordinary law, whereby the consequences of the Fall have been manifested, ever since the curse was laid on Eve, in the normal process of human generation.

We can know nothing of this higher law, whereby God purposed to effect the Incarnation independently of the Fall. We know nothing of the law of human generation as it would have been if there had been no Fall. We cannot measure the effect which the Fall may have had upon the original law of God's Purpose with regard to the Incarnation. All that we really do know is that the normal process of human generation, since the Fall, is the means of the transmission of original sin, and the cause of physical infirmity and weakness, from the sentence "*In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children,*" and our reason tells us that it is inconceivable to imagine that God should have become incarnate in accordance with this lower law, when the Incarnation, on account of the Fall, added to its original purpose the work of undoing the consequences of the Fall.

Its working is in harmony with our reason. It is therefore reasonable for us to believe that the Incarnation would take place in consonance with the original purpose of God, and in accordance with that higher law of God's working which has made it a fresh departure for the human race, and not according to the lower law of ordinary human generation. The real difficulty of belief would be caused by adopting the unthinkable hypothesis that God worked by this lower law when "the Word was made Flesh." Our reason and our faith alike guide us to expect that God would work the mystery of the Incarnation in accordance with that unknown higher law of His Eternal Purpose, which we call

“miraculous,” or “supernatural,” because it is beyond the range of our powers to co-ordinate its methods of working. The miraculous Conception and miraculous Birth of our Lord from a Virgin Mother exactly harmonises with the whole tenor of what God has revealed to us of Himself, and of our relations to Him.

We note in the miraculous Conception of our Lord the following points :—

(i) The Blessed Trinity co-operated in the Conception of our Lord,¹ although the Holy Ghost was the *active* principle of His Conception. The Eternal Purpose of the Father caused the Incarnation. “*Sic Deus dilexit mundum.*” “When the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman” (Gal. iv. 4). Here is the Father’s work in our Lord’s Conception, the work of *Mission, Initiative, or Sending forth.*² The work of the Son is in being sent by His own Will: “Lo, I come to do Thy Will, O God” (Heb. x. 7); and, further, by His taking our nature by His own act.³

¹ “Dicendum quod conceptionem corporis Christi tota Trinitas est operata. Attribuitur tamen hoc Spiritui Sancto . . . *Missio* attribuitur Patri, *efficere autem conceptionem* Spiritui Sancto, sed *carne* assumere attribuitur Filio” (S. Thom. *Summa* iii. Q. 32, A. i.).

² Tertullian says that the Word, “per Quem omnia facta sunt, et sine Quo factum est nihil,” was sent by the Father into the Virgin’s womb, “*missum a Patre in Virginem, et ex ea natum, Hominem et Deum, Filium hominis et Filium Dei, et cognominatum Iesum Christum*” (*Adv. Prax.* cap. ii.).

³ “For what was His Conception in the Virgin’s womb, save a taking of the original elements of our being, which He moulded into a perfect Manhood, through the power of the Holy Ghost? For the Word was made flesh; He clothed Himself in man’s whole nature” (R. Wilberforce, *On the Incarnation*, p. 63).

These words express the thought of S. Athanasius: “*Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ἐν ἀρχῇ κατερχόμενος (i.e. at the first moment of His Immaculate Conception) πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἐκ Παρθένου πλάττει ἑαυτῷ τὸ σῶμα, ἵνα μὴ μικρὸν*

"*Verbum caro factum est*"; from the moment of His Conception.

The work of the Holy Ghost, as the *vinculum Trinitatis*, the Eternal Bond of Love, proceeding from, and uniting the Father and the Son, was the forming of the Sacred Humanity of our Lord in the womb of the Blessed Virgin from her undefiled substance, and thus uniting the God-head and Manhood in the Person of Him Who is "God and Man, ONE Christ."

The words of the Archangel Gabriel involve this mysterious co-operation of the Blessed Trinity in the Immaculate Conception of our Lord Jesus Christ. "*The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee*" involves the thought of the miraculous operation of the Holy Spirit of God as the direct Agent of the Conception. The succeeding words, "*and the Power of the Highest shall overshadow thee*," cannot be treated as a Hebrew parallelism of speech. We ought to trace in them a fuller meaning of their own. "*The Power of the Highest*" (δύναμις Ὑψίστου, *Virtus Altissimi*) finds its parallel in "the Power of God" (Θεοῦ δύναμιν, *Dei Virtutem*) used by S. Paul in 1 Cor. i. 24 to describe Christ. "*The Power of the Highest*" thus becomes a paraphrase for "the Son of the Father," and the words of the Archangel can be interpreted as follows: "*The Holy Ghost*" (as the direct Agent of the Lord's Conception) "*shall come upon thee, and the Power of the Highest*" (the Son of the Father, sent forth by His Eternal Purpose) "*shall overshadow thee, wherefore that Holy Thing which is being born of thee shall be called the Son of God*"¹ (S. Luke i. 35).

τῆς Θεότητος γνώρισμα πᾶσι παράσχη, ὅτι ὁ τοῦτο πλάσας αὐτός ἐστι καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ποιητής. Τίς γὰρ ἰδὼν χωρὶς ἀνδρὸς ἐκ Παρθένου μόνης προερχόμενον σῶμα, οὐκ ἐνθυμεῖται τὸν ἐκ τούτῳ φαινόμενον εἶναι καὶ τῶν ἄλλων σωμάτων ποιητὴν καὶ Κύριον;" (*De Incarn.* c. 18).

¹ "Virtus Dei, quæ est Ipse Filius, . . . per Spiritum Sanctum corpus

(ii) Although we confess in the Apostles' Creed that Christ our Lord "was, in His Temporal generation, conceived by the Holy Ghost," it does not thereby follow that He could rightly be called the Son of the Holy Ghost, any more than He could be called the Son of the Blessed Trinity.

"Because the Holy Ghost did not beget Christ by any communication of His Essence, therefore He is not the Father of Him, though Christ was conceived by Him.¹ . . . Again, as the Holy Ghost did not frame the human nature of Christ out of His own substance, so we must not believe that He formed any part of His flesh of any other substance than that of the Virgin . . . The Word was conceived in the womb of a woman, not after the manner of men, but by the singular, powerful, invisible, immediate operation of the Holy Ghost, whereby a Virgin was, beyond the law of nature, enabled to conceive, and That which was conceived

formavit quod assumpsit. Et hoc etiam verba Angeli demonstrant dicentis: *Spiritus Sanctus superveniet in te*, quasi ad præparandam et formandam materiam corporis Christi, *et Virtus Altissimi*, id est, Christus *obumbrabit tibi*, id est, corpus in te humanitatis accipiet incorporeum lumen Divinitatis. *Umbra enim a lumine formatur et corpore*, ut Gregorius dicit" (*Moral.* lib. xviii. cap. 12).

"Altissimus autem intelligitur Pater, cuius virtus est Filius" (S. Thom. *Summa* III. Q. xxxii. A. 1.).

The view of S. Thomas is based on S. Gregory, S. Chrysostom, S. John Damascene, and Theophylact. Rufinus says: "Vide ergo cooperantem sibi invicem Trinitatem. Spiritus Sanctus venire dicitur super Virginem, et virtus Altissimi obumbrare ei. Quæ est autem Virtus Altissimi, nisi Ipse Christus, Qui est Dei Virtus et Dei Sapientia? Cuius autem hæc Virtus est? Altissimi, inquit. Adest ergo Altissimus, adest et Virtus Altissimi, adest et Spiritus Sanctus. Hæc est Trinitas ubique latens, et ubique apparens, vocabulis personisque discretæ, inseparabilis vero substantia Deitatis. Et quamvis solus Filius nascatur ex Virgine, adest tamen et Altissimus, adest et Spiritus Sanctus, ut et conceptus Virginis sanctificetur et partus" (*De Symb. Apost.* c. 10).

¹ S. Augustine says: "Natus est Christus de Spiritu Sancto non sicut Filius, et de Maria Virgine sicut Filius" (*Enchir.* c. 40).

in her was originally and completely sanctified" (Pearson *On the Creed*, Art. iii.).

The operation of the Holy Ghost in the Immaculate Conception of our Lord is compared by S. Leo the Great to His operation in Holy Baptism, as it also is in the Anglican Collect for Christmas Day.¹

(iii) The Blessed Virgin's consent to become the
Our Lord is
Very Man of
the substance
of the Virgin
Mary His
Mother. Θεοτόκος involved the passive ministry of her substance to form within her the Word Incarnate.² But this passive ministry carried with it the fact that our Lord was truly the seed of Abraham, and of David's royal line, according to the flesh. The genealogies of S. Matthew and S. Luke represent a literal physical fact of human descent which expresses the truth of our Lord's Manhood, as being the Son of Mary of the lineage of David, as well as the legal heir of Joseph.

The heresy of the Valentinian Gnostics denied that our
Heresy of
Valentinus. Lord was "Very Man of the substance of the Virgin Mary His Mother." Valentinus held that our Lord's body was created by the Demiurge, and passed through the womb of the Blessed Virgin as through a channel, taking nothing from her substance.³

¹ "Factus est homo Christus nostri generis, ut nos divinæ naturæ possimus esse consortes. Originem quam sumpsit in utero Matris posuit in fonte Baptismatis . . . Homini renascenti aqua Baptismatis instar est uteri virginalis, Eodem Spiritu replente fontem Qui replevit Virginem" (S. Leo, *Serm. de Nativ.* xxiv.).

² "Corpus Christi in sola materia corporali per divinam Conceptionis formationis rationem de Virgine assumptum est, non autem secundum aliquam rationem seminale humanam" (S. Augustine, lib. x. *Sup. Gent. ad Litt.* c. 20-21).

"Dicendum est quod in ipsa conceptione Christi B. Virgo nihil active operata est, sed solam materiam ministravit" (S. Thom. *Summa* III. Q. xxxii. A. 4.).

"Et ideo dicitur corpus Christi ex castissimis et purissimis sanguinibus Virginis formatum" (*Ib.* Q. xxxi. A. 5).

³ See S. Irenæus *adv. Hær.* i. cap. 7, where the opinion of Valen-

This Gnostic denial of the Incarnation and other heresies on the subject are confuted most clearly by the following extract from our Anglican Article II.: "Filius qui est Verbum Patris, ab æterno a Patre genitus verus et æternus Deus ac Patri consubstantialis" (thus setting forth the Eternal Generation of the Logos, as Θεὸς ἐκ Θεοῦ, Φῶς ἐκ Φῶτος, Θεὸς ἀληθινὸς ἐκ Θεοῦ ἀληθινοῦ against Arianism, the Article proceeds to set forth His Temporal Generation from the Blessed Θεοτόκος as follows): "in utero Beatæ Virginis *ex illius substantia*" (against Valentinus and the Docetæ¹); "ita ut duæ naturæ" (against Eutychianism); "divina et humana integre et perfecte in unitate personæ fuerint inseparabiliter coniunctæ" (against Nestorianism); "ex quibus est unus Christus, verus Deus et verus homo" (against the Apollinarian denial of the *anima rationalis* of our Lord's Perfect Manhood).

(iv) The Hypostatic Union of the Godhead and Manhood, in the Person of the One Christ, took place in the womb of the Blessed Virgin from the first instant of the Immaculate Conception of our Lord. We can declare with S. Augustine, "that the flesh of Christ was not conceived in the Virgin's Womb before It was taken into union by the Word," and with S. Gregory the Great, that "when the Angel had delivered his message, and when the Holy Spirit had come" (upon the Blessed

God and Man,
One Christ,
from the first
instant of the
Virgin-Concep-
tion.

S. Augustine,
S. Gregory,
and S. John
Damascene.

tinus is described as comparing our Lord's passage through the Virgin to the passage of water through a tube. So also Tertullian *contr. Valent.* c. 27, where the Valentinians are described as asserting that our Lord was produced *by means* of a Virgin, and not *of* a Virgin.

¹ S. Cyril of Jerusalem (A.D. 348) says that the Only-Begotten Son of God took our nature upon Him, γεννηθεὶς ἐξ ἁγίας Παρθένου καὶ Ἀγίου Πνεύματος οὐ δοκῆσει καὶ φαντασίᾳ τῆς ἐνανθρωπήσεως γενομένης (against the Docetæ); ἀλλὰ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ οὐδὲ ὥσπερ διὰ σωλήνος διελθὼν τῆς Παρθένου (against Valentinus); ἀλλὰ σαρκωθείς ἐξ αὐτῆς ἀληθῶς (*Catech.* iv. 9).

Virgin Mary) "thereupon the Word was in her womb—thereupon the Word within her womb was made flesh.' We can add with S. John Damascene, "At the same moment" (*i.e.* at our Lord's Immaculate Conception) "there was flesh, at the same moment there was the flesh of God the Word, and at the same moment there was flesh animated by a reasonable and intelligent soul."¹

We dare not attempt to penetrate the mystery enshrined in the Virgin's womb by virtue of her Virgin-Conception of our Lord. We dare not vaguely or rashly speculate concerning that "Mystery of godliness" which Angels desire to look into. But we

The inscrutable mystery of the Virgin-Conception.

may with reverence suggest certain positive and negative considerations, as the Fathers and S. Thomas have done. We need not follow S. Thomas in certain speculations derived from Aristotle, which deal with a special aspect of

The creation of our Lord's human soul.

Creationism. We accept Creationism as the doctrine of the Catholic Church; and we can say, with S. John Damascene, that at the moment of our Lord's Conception the Hypostatic Union took place, and our Lord's created human soul was infused into that Manhood "*which was taken into God*"² by virtue of the action of the Holy Ghost, whereby "the Word was made flesh."

The creation of Eve may be used as an analogy to teach us, allegorically, that the method of human generation and reproduction, in mankind unfallen, would not have been beset by the animalism, the sin and sorrow, which is

¹ "Firmissime tene et nullatenus dubites carnem Christi non fuisse conceptum in utero Virginis, priusquam susciperetur a Verbo" (Ap. Fulgentium, *L. de Fide ad Petr.* c. 18).

"Angelo nuntiante et Spiritu Sancto adveniente, mox Verbum in utero, mox intra uterum Verbum caro" (S. Greg. *Moralia*, c. 27).

S. John Damascene (Lib. iii. *Orthod. Fid.* c. 2).

² "Unus autem non conversione Divinitatis in carnem : sed assumptione humanitatis in Deum" (*Quicunque vult*).

inextricably interwoven with the reproduction of the race in fallen humanity, when it is not redeemed by the Sacrament of Marriage. The sexual instinct in fallen man cannot, without the Gift of Contineny or the Sacrament of Marriage, be kept within its legitimate boundaries, and is ever striving to evade them. We cannot tell how the *supernaturale donum* of original righteousness would have affected the process of human generation. We only know that it would have been free from sin and pain—and corruption, physical or spiritual. We only know that in its innocence and purity it would infinitely surpass our present experience of reproduction, and present no analogy to its affinities with sorrow and sin; and further, that it might, possibly, in its sinlessness, at all events, be compared to the Immaculate Conception of our Lord,—the miracle of His entrance into the womb of His Immaculate Virgin Mother; the miracle of His sojourn there as the Word Incarnate for nine months; and the equally stupendous miracle of His Birth, whereby she remained still a Virgin¹ when He had passed forth through the “closed door” of her womb.

The comparison, even of the possible process of generation in man unfallen, with the Immaculate Conception of our Lord, would necessarily fail for lack of dignity. For the uniting of the Infinite with the Finite, which is the

¹ The words of the Creed, “Qui conceptus est de Spiritu Sancto, natus ex Maria Virgine,” convey the truth that “Christ” was conceived and born miraculously, and the use of “Qui” implies that the Hypostatic Union of the Godhead and Manhood in the Person of God the Son took place on the instant of His miraculous Conception. The miraculous nature of the Virgin-Birth, which impaired not the Virginity of the Θεοτόκος, is also implied by the words “ex Maria Virgine,” for the title “Virgo” would not apply to one who had ceased to be a Virgin, from having endured the physical consequences of an ordinary human birth, even if she had miraculously conceived by the Holy Ghost.

The Blessed Virgin

mystery of the Incarnation, is, and must be, not only an event unique in the history of the created Universe, but the central fact in God's whole Creation. The compassing of

the Eternal God within the Virgin's womb is
Its infinite
dignity.

a mystery so stupendous that all comparisons regarding it must necessarily fail. But most Christians who are not Catholics, even if they accept the miraculous Conception of our Lord, fail to see that it must bring other miracles in its train. They would beset our Lord's Manhood with the accidents of sin, and the ordinary circumstances of

a normal human birth. They would rob the
It involves the
miracle of the
Virgin-Birth. mystery of His Virgin-Birth of its unique

dignity and miraculous character. And some of them profess to do this in the defence of the Reality of His Manhood and as a protest against Docetism. But He is *Verus Homo*; sin—and the consequences of sin—only excepted. The normal unconscious condition of an infant before birth, which may be regarded as a possible consequence of the Fall, and of a birth tainted with the physical consequences of the burden laid on Eve, forms no necessary part of the truth of our human nature which our Lord assumed as the Second Adam. This very analogy, drawn by S. Paul, should of itself teach us that the Second Adam from His Immaculate Conception onwards, was freed from all that the Fall entailed upon the first Adam and his descendants.¹

¹ We have to remember, in dealing with the Incarnation, that our Lord, as the Second Adam, took upon Himself the *perfection* of our nature—body, soul, and spirit—as it existed in Adam unfallen. He was made like unto us, *sin*, and the consequences of sin, upon man fallen, *intellectually* and *physically*, being excepted. S. Athanasius, the great Doctor of the Incarnation, makes it very clear that our Lord could not suffer diseases, and by implication mental defects or limitations, as the Perfect Man. He says of our Lord's death in His full vigour of body, in contrast with death by disease: "Πρῶτον μὲν, ὅτι ὁ συμβάλων τοῖς ἀνθρώποις θάνατος κατὰ ἀσθένειαν τῆς αὐτῶν φύσεως

If S. John Baptist, *before his birth*, was able by God's grace to recognise the Presence of the Incarnate Christ when the Blessed Virgin visited his mother Elisabeth,¹ directly after the Annunciation, and to communicate his knowledge to his mother so that she saluted the Blessed Virgin as Θεοτόκος, we may be

The Visitation
of the Blessed
Virgin Mary.

αὐτοῖς παραγίνεται· οὐ δυνάμενοι γὰρ ἐπὶ πολὺ διαμένειν, τῷ χρόνῳ διαλύονται. Διὰ τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ νόσοι τοῦτοις συμβάλουσι, καὶ ἐξασθενήσαντες ἀποθνήσκουσιν. Ὁ δὲ Κύριος οὐκ ἀσθενής (as the Second Adam), ἀλλὰ Θεοῦ Δύναμις, καὶ Θεοῦ Λόγος ἐστί, καὶ Αὐτοζωή. Ἐπειδὴ καὶ Ζωὴ ἦν, καὶ Θεοῦ Λόγος, καὶ ἔδει τὸν ὑπὲρ πάντων γενέσθαι θάνατον· διὰ τοῦτο . . . συνίσχυνεν ἐν αὐτῷ τὸ σῶμα . . . ἐπεὶ μηδὲ νοσεῖν ἔδει τὸν Κύριον, τὸν τῶν ἄλλων τὰς νόσους θεραπεύοντα.” (Diseases are the result of the Fall, the Perfect Man could never suffer disease.) “Προηγῆσασθαι μέντοι τοῦ θανάτου νόσον ἀπρεπὲς πάλιν ἦν, ἵνα μὴ ἀσθένεια τοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι νομισθῇ.” S. Athanasius proceeds to show that our Lord *really* hungered as *Verus Homo*, but His body was not *wasted* by hunger, “because of the Lord Who wore it” (*De Incarnatione*, c. 21).

¹ In dealing with the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Elisabeth it will not be necessary in this volume to attempt to comment upon the *Magnificat*. Canon Liddon's beautiful and most spiritual treatise is readily accessible, and Isaac Williams (*Nativity*, p. 42-53) gives an excellent comment upon it from the standpoint of the early Tractarians. Besides which, Cornelius à Lapide gives, in his Commentary, the best thoughts of S. Augustine and other authorities, patristic and mediæval. The view here taken of the consciousness of S. John the Baptist before his birth is denied by Calvin, as was to be expected from his standpoint, and most Protestants have followed him. But the consent of the Fathers interprets the passage of the pre-natal consciousness of S. John Baptist, whose *birth* is kept as a Festival of the Church, owing to its miraculous circumstances. Origen says: “*Then first Jesus made His Forerunner a prophet*,” and Irenæus (lib. 3, c. 18), says: “*He recognised the Lord in the womb, and, leaping for joy, saluted Him*.” And S. Gregory (*Moral.* lib. iii. c. 5): “*In his mother's womb he was filled with the spirit of prophecy*.” So also S. Cyril, S. Ambrose, S. Augustine (Corn. à Lap. *in loc.*). S. Augustine is not as clear as the other Fathers. Bishop Wordsworth (*in loc.*) says: “*Elisabeth, the mother, first heard the word, but the babe in her womb first felt the grace*,” agreeing here, as he usually does, with the *consensus Patrum*. Sadler says: “*If we believe that the Incarnation had*

sure that our Lord had, before His Birth, the full possession of consciousness *in anima rationali* which S. Thomas ascribes to Him.¹ We may reasonably believe that the human soul of our Lord increased in wisdom and knowledge from the first moment of its conscious existence by virtue of its Hypostatic union with the Godhead, and there is no reason to compel us to compare the mystery of the pre-natal existence of our Lord's Manhood, which was conceived by the Holy Ghost, with what human knowledge tells us of the pre-natal existence of persons conceived and born in sin. No physical or spiritual analogy is possible between what our Lord's Manhood was before His birth and what our sinful humanity is under similar conditions. There is no Docetism in believing that the mystery of our Lord's pre-natal existence as Man involved a freedom from all disabilities, physical and mental, which come from sin. Whatever special glory of body, soul, and spirit pertained to His sinless Manhood *before His Birth* cannot in the least diminish the truth and reality of the Perfection of His Human Nature as *Verus Homo*.²

taken place . . . that Elisabeth had conceived supernaturally, and that he whom she had conceived was to be the Forerunner of the then present Son of God, surely we shall acknowledge that the joy of the unborn Forerunner was consistent with it all. The Evangelist evidently relates it as a fact beyond all natural explanation."

¹ S. Thomas, *Summa* III. Q. xxxiii. A. 2.

² Professor Lépecier, a modern French theologian, comments as follows upon the conclusions of S. Thomas regarding our Lord's human soul: "Quocirca in Christi Conceptione quædam perfectio invenitur, quæ in aliorum hominum conceptione deest. Revera in conceptione aliorum hominum, corpus, tanquam imperfecte dispositum primo recipit animam imperfectam, scilicet vegetativam, et postea, quando est perfectius dispositum, animam perfectiorem, nempe sensitivam, abiecta priori; demum quando est perfecte dispositum, animam recipit similiter perfectam, videlicet animam rationalem: Corpus vero Christi, propter infinitam virtutem Spiritus Sancti formantis illud,

The conclusions of S. Thomas.

We may, with all reverence, accept the following conclusions of S. Thomas concerning the mystery of the Incarnation, as in consonance with the mind of the Church: (a) The Body of Christ, in the first instant of His Conception, was formed, animated with a reasonable soul, and taken into union by the Word. (b) The Son of God took a true body, with a true soul and spirit; and that He took, in the order of dignity, the spirit, the soul, and the body (though simultaneously in the order of time) not as a human person (a man), but as *the* Man representing humanity, taking to Himself human nature as the Second Adam. At the same moment of time (*i.e.* in His Conception) the spirit linked the soul, and the soul linked the body (forming conjointly *Verus Homo*), to God the Word (*Verus Deus*) in Hypostatic Union.¹

The Virgin-Conception and Virgin-Birth of our Lord form an integral portion of the Revelation of the Incarnate Logos. The Catholic Church has taught from the first the mystery of the Incarnation, which she subsequently enshrined in the Apostles' Creed in the words, "*Qui conceptus est de Spiritu Sancto, Natus ex Maria Virgine.*" The contention of Dr. Harnack that the Miraculous Conception of our Lord is to be rejected as a fact because it "does not belong to the earliest Gospel preaching" is an instance of the dogmatism of the modern historico-critical

The Virgin-Conception and Virgin-Birth taught from the first by the Church.

Dr. Harnack's baseless contention.

statim in primo instanti recepit animam perfectam, id est rationalem." And then he shows that this instant consciousness of our Lord's *rationabilis anima* did not cause Him to be any the less *Verus Homo*, to prove which he quotes S. Leo, as saying, "Non alterius naturæ erat caro Christi quam nostra : nec alio illi, quam cæteris hominibus, anima est inspirata principio" (*Ep. ad Iulian.* xi.).

¹ Cf. S. Thomas, *Summa* III. Q. xxxiii. A. 1, 2, 3; Q. iv. A. 2, 4; Q. v. A. 1, 3, 4; and Q. vi. A. 1, 2, 3).

The Blessed Virgin

school which carries with it its own refutation.¹ It may be conceded that the preaching of the Apostles did not *begin* with the teaching of this fact, and that they taught other things at first.

Doctrinaire theologians in Europe who know nothing of the work of a missionary to the heathen make astounding and unreasonable assumptions. The writer's experience of over thirty years' work in South Africa has given him some knowledge of missionary methods. To assert, as Dr. Harnack does, that because the Apostles did not *begin* with teaching the miraculous Conception, it was on that account a subsequent accretion to the original *credenda* of Christendom, is, to a practical missionary, amazing folly. S. Paul's preaching on Areopagus, modified to suit simpler minds, is the method which all sensible missionaries would adopt in teaching the Gospel to the heathen.² But the modern historico-critical school is marked by defects far more serious than lack of practical wisdom and a true sense of proportion. Its methods are vitiated at

The due order of missionary preaching would not begin with these mysteries.

Two evils of modern criticism.

¹ A distinguished modern scholar, Professor Zahn, says of our Lord's miraculous Conception and Birth: "Dies aber ist ein Element des Symbolum gewesen, so weit wir dasselbe zurück verfolgen können; und wenn Ignatius als Zeuge für ein noch alteres, aus früher apostolischer Zeit stammendes Taufbekenntnis gelten darf, so hat auch in diesem bereits der Name der Jungfrau Maria seine Stelle gehabt. . . . Dass die Annahme eines ursprünglichen Christenthums ohne den Glauben an den von der Jungfrau geborenen Gottessohn Jesus eine Fiktion ist" (*Das Apostolische Symbolum*, pp. 55-68). We may translate thus: "This has been an element in the Creed as far as we can trace it back; and if Ignatius can be taken as a witness of a Baptismal Creed springing from early Apostolic times, certainly in that Creed the name of the Virgin Mary had already its place. . . . The theory of an original Christianity without the belief in Jesus the Son of God, born of the Virgin, is a *Fiction*."

² "The shrewd common sense of Bishop Daniel of Winchester's letter to S. Boniface at the beginning of his missionary work as the

the core by two root evils. The first is a desire, conscious

(i) Hostility to or unconscious, to eliminate the miraculous, or the miraculous supernatural, element in the Christian Revelation elements of the Creed, wherever it is possible to do so. The second

evil in its methods is the demand it makes for historical

(ii) Desire for evidence concerning the truths of the Creed, of mathematical certainty of the same nature, and built upon the same basis evidence. of absolute certainty, as the evidence for the

truths of science or mathematics. It ignores the fact that

God has not willed to commit to our knowledge His

Revelation of Himself in Jesus Christ upon the same basis

of evidence as that upon which we accept the fact that

the diagonal of a square is greater than one of its sides.

If God's Revelation of Himself to the world was made

upon the basis of evidence of such a character that no sane

person could by any possibility reject it, there would be no

room for the freedom of the human will, or for the moral

and spiritual efficacy of the true relations of faith and

reason. If the Revelation of God made no demands upon

our faith, it would have no more moral effect upon

us than the enforced acceptance, by our reason, of

the fact that any two sides of a triangle are together greater

than the third side. The Revelation of God appeals to our

love, and *trust*, and *faith*, as well as to our reason.

The Catholic Church is the Body of Christ, and its office

is to *guide* us, and not to *force* us, *into all*

truth.

The Spirit of God is the perpetual illuminating

Power of the Church, which guides it, century by century,

Apostle of Germany is well worth perusal. Even Dr. Harnack would

not assert that Bishop Daniel did not, as an eighth-century theologian,

believe in the Virgin-Conception and Virgin-Birth of our Lord. And

yet the Bishop says nothing on either of these facts in his letter to

S. Boniface. He gives him advice as to his preaching, and tells him

to begin with natural religion, and then gradually advance " (Ozanam,

Études Germaniques, ii. 180).

The true character of Revelation.

The office of the Church as the teacher of dogma.

to declare, to develop and to illuminate in due proportion and order, the original deposit of truth which our Lord taught to His Apostles, especially during the great Forty Days before His Ascension.

The Catholic Church cannot invent new doctrines. The orderly development of "*the Faith once delivered*" is a very different thing. It is an evolution of dogma, under the guidance of Him Who said, *Lo! I am with you all the days, even unto the end of the world*" (S. Matt. xxviii. 20). The evidence for the Virgin-Conception and Virgin-Birth of our Lord must be approached upon the basis of God's gifts of Faith and Reason, whereby we are enabled to accept what God has revealed to us through the Catholic Church "*as the pillar and ground of the Truth*" (1 Tim. iii. 15).

The first written testimony is the account, evidently derived from S. Joseph, in the Gospel of S. Matthew, and that, which is equally evidently derived from the Blessed Virgin, in the Gospel of S. Luke,¹ both of which the Catholic Church has stamped with her infallible authority as true and inspired records. Next in date we have

S. Ignatius of Antioch (A.D. 110). We have already quoted him on the *μυστήρια κραυγῆς*, and shall allude to this passage subsequently. In his *Epistle to the Smyrneans* he says: "I have perceived that ye are established by faith immovable . . . firmly persuaded as touching our Lord that He is truly of the race of David according to the Flesh, but Son of God by the Divine Will and Power, *truly born of a Virgin*, and baptized by John . . . truly nailed up for our sakes in the flesh under Pontius Pilate and Herod the Tetrarch."² Here he places

¹ The comment of Dr. Swete on these two Gospel records is lucid and full of devout scholarship (*The Apostles' Creed*, pp. 48-53).

² "Ἐνόησα γὰρ ὑμᾶς κατηρτισμένους ἐν ἀκινήτῳ πίστει . . . πεπληροφορημένους εἰς τὸν Κύριον ἡμῶν ἀληθῶς ὄντα ἐκ γένους Δαυεὶδ κατὰ σάρκα,

our Lord's Crucifixion and His Virgin-Birth on the same level as historical facts. In his *Epistle to the Trallians* he writes of "Jesus Christ, Who was of the race of David, Who was the Son of Mary, Who was truly born."¹ We shall deal hereafter with the fact that the *Mystery* of the Virgin-Birth, as distinct from an ordinary human birth, of which S. Ignatius wrote to the Ephesians, does not lessen its witness against Docetism, since he here says our Lord was *truly born*.

The *Apology* of Aristides was written about A.D. 130.

Aristides. Part of its Greek text has recently been re-covered which sets forth concisely the truth of the Incarnation as follows: "The Christians trace their descent from the Lord Jesus Christ; now He is confessed, by the agency of the Holy Ghost, to be the Son of the *Most High God*" (an allusion to the Annunciation Message), "having come down from Heaven for the salvation of men, and having been born of the Holy Virgin . . . He took flesh and appeared unto men."² Here again we have the fact of the "mystery" of the Virgin-Birth (following upon the agency of the Holy Ghost in the Virgin-Conception), set in flat opposition to Docetism by the words "He took flesh."

Justin Martyr (A.D. 140) alludes as follows to Isa. vii.

Justin Martyr. 14: "We find it foretold in the Books of the Prophets that Jesus *our Christ* should come *born of a Virgin* . . . should be crucified, and should die,

υἱὸν Θεοῦ κατὰ θέλημα καὶ δύναμιν Θεοῦ, γεγεννημένον ἀληθῶς ἐκ Παρθένου, βεβαπτισμένον ὑπὸ Ἰωάννου . . . ἀληθῶς ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου καὶ Ἡρώδου τετράρχου καθηλωμένον ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἐν σαρκί" (*Smyrn.* 1).

¹ "Κωφώθητε οὖν, ὅταν ὑμῖν χωρὶς Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ λαλή τις, τοῦ ἐκ γένους Δαυεὶδ, τοῦ ἐκ Μαρίας, ὃς ἀληθῶς ἐγεννήθη" (*Trall.* 9).

² "Οἱ δὲ Χριστιανοὶ γενεαλογοῦνται ἀπὸ τοῦ Κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, οὗτος δὲ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ Ὑψίστου ὁμολογεῖται ἐν Πνεύματι Ἁγίῳ ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ καταβὰς διὰ τὴν σωτηρίαν τῶν ἀνθρώπων· καὶ ἐκ Παρθένου ἁγίας γεννηθεὶς . . . σάρκα ἀνέλαβε, καὶ ἀνεφάνη ἀνθρώποις" (*Texts and Studies*, vol. i. pp. 78, 79, 110, *The Remains of the Greek Text of Aristides*, by the Dean of Westminster).

and rise again, and go up to Heaven, and should both *be*, and be called, the Son of God.”¹ And again he says: “He was brought forth as Man of a Virgin, and was called Jesus, and was crucified, and died, and rose again, and has gone up into Heaven.”² Here, like S. Ignatius, S. Justin sets the Virgin-Birth in the same category of facts believed by the Catholic Church as he does the Crucifixion, the Death, the Resurrection, and the Ascension of our Lord. In his *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew* he speaks of the “Son of God, the first begotten of every creature, Who was born of a Virgin, and made Man capable of suffering, and was crucified by your nation in the time of Pontius Pilate,”³ etc., again setting the Virgin-Birth and the Crucifixion as equally well known facts of our Lord’s life.

S. Irenæus, writing about A.D. 180—190, gives a summary of the Catholic Faith, which he says the whole Church scattered throughout the world received from the Apostles: namely, the belief “In one God the Father Almighty, and in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God, Who was incarnate for our salvation and in the Holy Ghost . . . and the Birth from the Virgin, and the Passion, and the Resurrection from the dead.”⁴ He adds that the

¹ “Ἐν δὴ ταῖς τῶν προφητῶν βίβλοις ἔβρομεν προσκηρυσσόμενον παραγινόμενον γεννώμενον διὰ Παρθένου . . . σταυρούμενον Ἰησοῦν τὸν ἡμέτερον Χριστόν, καὶ ἀποθνήσκοντα, καὶ ἀνεγειρόμενον, καὶ εἰς οὐρανοῦς ἀνερχόμενον, καὶ υἱὸν Θεοῦ ὄντα καὶ κεκλημένον” (*Apol.* i. 31).

² “Διὰ Παρθένου ἄνθρωπος ἀπεκνήθη, καὶ Ἰησοῦς ἐπωνομάσθη, καὶ σταυρωθεὶς καὶ ἀποθανὼν ἀνέστη, καὶ ἀνελήλυθεν εἰς οὐρανόν” (*Apol.* i. 46).

³ “Κατὰ γὰρ τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ τούτου τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ πρωτοτόκου πάσης κτίσεως (this phrase is quoted from Col. i. 15), καὶ διὰ Παρθένου γεννηθέντος καὶ παθητοῦ γενομένου ἀνθρώπου, καὶ σταυρωθέντος ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου ὑπὸ τοῦ λαοῦ ὑμῶν,” κ.τ.λ. (*Dial.* 85).

⁴ “Ἡ μὲν γὰρ Ἐκκλησία, καί περ καθ’ ὅλης τῆς οἰκουμένης ἕως περάτων τῆς γῆς διεσπαρμένη, παρὰ δὲ τῶν Ἀποστόλων καὶ τῶν ἐκείνων μαθητῶν παραλαβοῦσα τὴν εἰς ἓνα Θεὸν Πατέρα παντοκράτορα, . . . πίστιν’ καὶ εἰς

Churches of Germany, Spain, Gaul, the East, Egypt, Libya, and "those established in the central parts of the earth" (by which he evidently means Rome and Italy) are agreed in this Faith.

Tertullian represents the Latin Christianity of North Africa, and, writing about A.D. 200, he says:

"The Rule of Faith is altogether *one*, alone firm and unalterable; the Rule, namely, of believing in One God Almighty, the Maker of the Universe; and His Son Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, crucified under Pontius Pilate."¹ Again he quotes the Rule of Faith, that God made all things out of nothing by His Word, and "that this Word, called His Son, was . . . brought down at last by the Spirit, and the Power of God the Father, into the Virgin Mary, made flesh in her womb, and was born of her."²

S. Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 190) says that "the Son of God, Who made all things, took flesh and was conceived in the womb of the Virgin, and suffered and rose again."³

Origen (A.D. 230) writes: "He became Man and was incarnate, although He was God, and being made Man, He remained that which he was, God. He assumed a body like our own, differing in this respect alone,

ἐνα Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν, τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, τὸν σαρκωθέντα ὑπὲρ τῆς ἡμετέρας σωτηρίας καὶ εἰς Πνεῦμα Ἅγιον . . . καὶ τὴν ἐκ Παρθένου γέννησιν, καὶ τὸ πάθος, καὶ τὴν ἔγερσιν ἐκ νεκρῶν . . ." (*Contra Hæres.* I. x. 1).

¹ "Regula quidem fidei una omnino est, sola immobilis et irreformabilis, credendi scilicet in unicum Deum Omnipotentem, mundi Conditorem; et in Filium eius Iesum Christum, natum ex Virgine Maria, crucifixum sub Pontio Pilato" (*De Virg. Veland.* 1).

² "Id Verbum, Filium eius appellatum . . . postremo delatum ex Spiritu, Patris Dei et virtute, in Virginem Mariam, carnem factum in utero eius, et ex ea natum" (*De Præscript. Hæret.* c. xiii.).

³ "Ἡδὴ δὲ καὶ ἡ οἰκονομία πᾶσα ἡ περὶ τοῦ Κυρίου προφητευθεῖσα . . . ὅτ' ἂν τις τὸν Υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, τοῦ τὰ πάντα πεποιηκέντος, σάρκα ἀνελήφοντα, καὶ ἐν μήτρᾳ Παρθένου κυοφορηθέντα . . . πεπονθότα, καὶ ἀνεσταμένον λέγει" (*Strom.* VI. xv. 127).

that it was born of a Virgin and of the Holy Spirit.¹ Again he says: "Who has not heard of the Virgin-Birth of Jesus—of the Crucified—of His Resurrection . . . and the announcement of the Judgment to come?"²

The testimony of the great and intellectual Church of Alexandria to the Virgin-Conception and Virgin-Birth is given by Origen and S. Clement. S. Irenæus links East and West together, since before he came to Lyons, and visited Rome, he was the pupil of S. Polycarp of Smyrna, who was himself taught by S. John. He represents the Apostolic teaching in a direct line. Tertullian represents the testimony of Africa, and that of Palestine and Syria is represented by Justin Martyr and S. Ignatius, while Aristides represents Greece. We have in these quotations the universal consent of the Catholic Church of the second century. It will suffice to take the great name of S. Cyprian,

S. Cyprian. as representing the third century. In his *Testimonies against the Jews* (bk. ii. c. 8 and 9)

he deals with the Incarnation under the following headings: "That although from the beginning He had been Son of God, He had yet to be begotten again according to the flesh"; "That this should be the sign of His Nativity, that He should be born of a Virgin"; "Man and God, Son of Man and of God." He quotes Isa. vii. 10-15: "*Behold, the Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son,*" and he also quotes the Annunciation Message to the Blessed Virgin, and the Annunciation Vision of S. Joseph. We need not fill space with the vast mass of post-Nicene testimony to the Virgin-Conception of our Lord. The

¹ "Homo factus incarnatus est, cum Deus esset, et homo factus mansit quod erat, Deus. Corpus assumpsit nostro corpori simile, eo solo differens, quod natum ex Virgine et Spiritu Sancto est" (*De Principiis*, i. 4).

² "Τίτι γὰρ λανθάνει ἡ ἐκ Παρθένου γέννησις Ἰησοῦ, καὶ ὁ ἐσταυρωμένος, καὶ ἡ . . . ἀνάστασις αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἡ καταγγελλομένη κρίσις;" (*Contr. Celsum*, i. 7).

ante-Nicene evidence which we have already quoted suffices to establish the fact that the Virgin-Conception of our Lord was held and taught, as a *fact*, just as His Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension were taught as *facts*. The earliest form of the Latin Creed

Witness of
Creeds. is found, in an abbreviated form, in the passage

of Tertullian (*De Virg. Veland.*) already cited.¹ It contained the Virgin-Birth, which was so universally accepted that the Nicene Fathers considered it to be sufficiently expressed by the words *καὶ σαρκωθέντα, ἐνανθρωπήσαντα*. The Creed of the Apostolical Constitutions (lib. vii. c. 41) contained the words "*born of the Holy Virgin Mary*." Its date is uncertain, but it probably belongs to the early years of the third century. The Creed of S. Cyril of Jerusalem (A.D. 348) contained the phrase *ἐνανθρωπήσαντα ἐκ Παρθένου καὶ Πνεύματος Ἁγίου*, which is parallel to the versions of the Nicene Creed which appear in the *Ancoratus* of S. Epiphanius (A.D. 373). The first form has *σαρκωθέντα ἐκ Πνεύματος Ἁγίου καὶ Μαρίας τῆς Παρθένου*, and the second has the variation "Who was truly born of the Holy Ever-Virgin Mary by the Holy Ghost" (*γεννηθέντα τελείως ἐκ τῆς ἁγίας Μαρίας τῆς ἀειπαρθένου διὰ Πνεύματος Ἁγίου*).

The Council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451) confirmed the Creed of Nicæa, and of the Council of Constantinople (A.D. 381), both forms containing the words as we use them now: "*And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man* (*καὶ σαρκωθέντα ἐκ Πνεύματος Ἁγίου καὶ Μαρίας τῆς Παρθένου καὶ ἐνανθρωπήσαντα*). We may fitly close the evidence of the Faith of the Catholic Church in the Virgin-Conception of our Lord with these words of the Nicene Creed, as finally ratified at Chalcedon.

¹ Dr. Swete quotes Dr. Harnack as saying that he considers it "an assured result of research that the Old Roman Creed came into existence about, or shortly before, the middle of the second century" (Swete, *The Apostles' Creed*, p. 14).

(β) *Virgo Pariens.*

It will be obvious that very much of the evidence for the Virgin-Conception which has already been cited is also applicable to the Virgin-Birth. We have already indicated the fact that the mystery of the Virgin-Birth is the logical sequence of the mystery of the Virgin-Conception, in accordance with the Unknown Higher Law of the Incarnation, and have remarked that to rob the Virgin-Birth of its unique mystery and dignity, by bringing it down to the level of an ordinary and normal human birth in its physical circumstances, is to open the door to a materialising view of the Incarnation, which tends to Cerinthianism. A person who accepts the mystery of the Virgin-Conception, and denies the mystery of the Virgin-Birth, which is its necessary consequence, is in danger of denying *both* mysteries, and consequently denying the Incarnation, as revealed by God through His Church.

The acceptance of the view of most modern scholars with regard to the source of the first two chapters of S. Luke's Gospel, furnishes a very evident reason for the reticence of the narrative upon the mystery of the Virgin-Birth. It is evident that S. Luke derived his information¹ from the only person who could give it to him, namely, the Blessed Virgin herself, and that she would be, by nature and grace, reticent concerning the details of the mystery of our Lord's Birth. All that her narrative tells us is "Καὶ ἔτεκε τὸν

The Virgin-Birth is the consequence of the Virgin-Conception.

Necessary reticence of the Gospel narrative.

¹ Dr. Swete (*Apostles' Creed*, p. 49) agrees with Godet, Weiss, and Dr. Sanday in believing that S. Luke used a document which embodied the narrative of the Blessed Virgin. S. Luke's link with the Blessed Virgin, as the painter of her portrait in accordance with tradition, is beautifully allegorised by Dean Luckock as expressing his portraiture of her character in his Gospel (*Special Characteristics of the Four Gospels*, p. 140).

υἱὸν αὐτῆς τὸν πρωτότοκον,¹ καὶ ἐσπαργάνωσεν αὐτόν, καὶ ἀνέκλινεν αὐτὸν ἐν τῇ φάτνῃ" (Vulg. *Et peperit filium suum primogenitum, et pannis Eum involvit, et reclinavit Eum* in præsepio). We have here a description of

Its interpretation. successive and continuous action on the part of the Blessed Virgin. If the Birth of our Lord from her had been a normal human birth compassed with the physical pain, weakness, and infirmity which form the punishment of Eve's transgression, it would have been impossible for her to have brought forth her Son and *straightway* to have wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in the manger. We have here a miraculous circumstance, recorded with the utmost delicacy and reserve, which necessarily carries with it other miraculous circumstances, which could not be recorded by the Blessed Virgin herself, but which the universal judgment and tradition of the Church has handed down as the "mystery" of the Virgin-Birth, as being Immaculate, and thus freed from the physical consequences and circumstances

¹ Even Renan is constrained to admit that "the proofs of our Lord being the only child of Mary are conclusive" (*Les Évangiles*, p. 542).

Bishop Lightfoot says that "the prominent idea conveyed by the term 'Firstborn' to a Jew would not be the birth of other children, but the special consecration of this one. . . . Thus 'Firstborn' does not necessarily suggest 'later-born,' any more than *son* suggests *daughter*. The two words together describe the condition under which, in obedience to the law, a child was consecrated to God" (*Galatians*, p. 263).

Bishop Wordsworth *in loc.* quotes S. Cyril (p. 123, ed. Mai), who aptly observes that our Lord is called "Firstborn" in *two* senses in Scripture: (i) as the "Firstborn" (*primogenitus*) of God (Heb. i. 6), and (ii) as the "Firstborn" of Mary; and that as certainly as the word *πρωτότοκος*, in Heb. i. 6, is equivalent to *μονογενής* or *only begotten*, so it bears the same meaning here, namely, that the "Firstborn" of Mary is her "only begotten." In both cases our Lord is *πρῶτος* and *μόνος*. It is a curious instance of heretical perversity of interpretation that "Firstborn" should be interpreted to deny the *ἀειπαρθένια*.

which accompany the act of birth in the ordinary conditions which the Scripture has revealed to us as forming part of the punishment for original sin.

We have already dealt with the fact that the "Protevangelium" of James, notwithstanding its uncanonical and unauthoritative character, may yet enshrine certain true traditions.¹ It may embroider the mystery of the Virgin-Birth with fictions, as S. Jerome says, but the fictions bear witness to the fact. If the mystery of the Virgin-Birth had not been a *fact* which Christians believed at the beginning of the second century, it would not have appeared as it does in the "Protevangelium" as the centre of fictitious miracles. S. Jerome interprets ἐσπαργάνωσεν as testifying to the supernatural character of the Virgin Birth.² It is strange

¹ The "Cave" of the Nativity, first mentioned in the "Protevangelium," has rooted itself into the historical tradition of Christendom. The Nave of the Basilica, founded by the Empress Helena when she visited the Holy Places in Palestine (A.D. 326), still enshrines the Holy Cave at Bethlehem, and near it is the cell where S. Jerome lived for thirty years, and completed his greatest work, the Latin Vulgate. Justin Martyr gives the authentic and genuine tradition of the "Cave" as follows: "Ἐπειδὴ Ἰωσήφ οὐκ εἶχεν ἐν τῇ κώμῃ ἐκεῖνη ποῦ καταλῦσαι ἐν σπηλαίῳ τινα σύνεγγυς τῆς κώμης κατέλυσε· καὶ τότε, ὄντων αὐτῶν ἐκεῖ, ἐτετράκει ἡ Μαρία τὸν Χριστόν, καὶ ἐν φάτνῃ αὐτὸν ἐτεθείκει" (*Dial.* 78).

Origen also mentions the "Cave": "Ἀκολουθῶς τῇ ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ περὶ τῆς γενέσεως αὐτοῦ ἱστορίᾳ δέκνυται τῷ ἐν Βηθλεὲμ σπηλαίῳ φάτνῃ ἐνθα ἐσπαργανώθη" (*Contra Cels.* i. 51).

² S. Jerome's words are best understood as quoted by S. Thomas (*Summa* III. Q. xxxv. A. 6). He says that in S. Luke ii. "dicitur quod B. Virgo Ipsum puerum, Quem peperat, pannis involvit, et posuit in præsepio. Et ex hoc ostenditur narratio illius libri, qui est apocryphus, esse falsa. Unde Hieronymus dicit contra Helvidium (cap. 4), *Nulla ibi obstetrix, nulla muliercularum sedulitas intercessit; et mater et obstetrix fuit. Pannis involvit infantem, et posuit in præsepio: quæ sententia apocryphorum deliramenta convincit.*" The story to which he alludes is mentioned by S. Clement of Alexandria: "Μετὰ τὸ τεκεῖν αὐτὴν μαιωθεῖσαν φασὶ τινες παρθένον εὐρεθῆναι" (*Strom.* p. 889).

that Dr. Farrar, whose Protestantism impelled him to advocate the Helvidian heresy, and deny the *ἀειπαρθενία* of the Blessed Virgin, is forced to recognise the mystery covered by the word *ἐσπαργάνωσεν*.¹ One of the most materialistic of the commentators of the eighteenth century, who went so far as to deny that our Lord passed through the closed doors when He appeared to the Apostles after His Resurrection, stating that He *opened* them and passed through without being perceived by the Apostles, yet is compelled to adopt the patristic view of *ἐσπαργάνωσεν*,² as Dr. Farrar does.

Bishop Wordsworth (*in loc.*) holds the same view of *ἐσπαργάνωσεν* as involving the Birth of our Lord *sine dolore Matris*, and cites, to the same effect, S. Cyprian,¹ S. Jerome, Maldonatus, and Dean Burgon. Prebendary Sadler takes the same view in his well-known Commentary, and quotes S. Gregory of Nyssa as saying: "Though coming in the form of man, yet not in everything is He subject to the laws of man's nature; for while His being born of a woman tells of human nature, virginity

¹ Dr. Farrar's note is so remarkable, when considered in relation to his denial of the *ἀειπαρθενία*, that it is worth quoting *in extenso*. He observes: "*Nulla ibi obstetrix, nulla muliercularum sedulitas intercessit*" (Jer. *adv. Helvid.*), "probably with reference to Ps. xxii. 9, *Thou art He who tookest me out of my mother's womb*. This, however, is involved in *ἐσπαργάνωσεν*" (*Life of Christ*, p. 14).

² Thomas Scott, the well-known Protestant commentator, quotes with approval Whitby's materialistic view that it was *groundless* and *absurd* to suppose that our Lord after His Resurrection could pass through *closed doors*, yet at the same time Scott quotes and adopts Whitby's interpretation of *ἐσπαργάνωσεν*, which was very remarkable in a commentator who strove to minimise the supernatural, and is as follows: "By her doing this herself it is thought that her labour was without the usual pangs of childbirth." Here Whitby agrees with S. Thomas in saying: "*Christus fuerit natus sine dolore matris*" (*Summa* III. Q. xxxv. A. 6).

becoming capable of childbirth betokens something above man. Of Him, then, His Mother's burden was light, the birth immaculate, the delivery without pain, the Nativity without defilement. . . . For as she (Eve) who by her guilt engrafted death into our nature was condemned to bring forth in trouble, it was meet that she who brought life into the world should accomplish her delivery with joy"¹ (*S. Luke*, p. 46).

S. Thomas, in dealing with the penalties of the disobedience of our first parents, implies that
S. Thomas Aquinas.
our Lord was conceived and born in accordance with a Higher Law beyond and above the law of our nature. He says that the exemption of the Blessed Virgin from the curse of Eve was because her conception "was not in accordance with the law of our nature derived from our first parents."²

¹ S. Greg. Nyssen. *Hom. in Diem Nat. Christi*. A parallel passage of S. Gregory of Nyssa is as follows: "When God was manifested in the flesh, He did not allow the passions of nature in the formation of His own Body, but it was from the Holy Spirit and the Power of the Most High that the Child was born to us, and neither did the Virgin suffer, nor was the Spirit minished nor the Power of the Most High divided . . . and the Child was born whole, and to the undefiled estate of His Mother He wrought no scathe" (*C. Eun.* II. vol. ii. p. 536).

² "Quæcunque enim mulier concipit, necesse est quod ærumnas patitur et cum dolore pariat; præter B. Virginem, quæ sine corruptione concepit, et sine dolore peperit, quia eius conceptio non fuit secundum legem naturæ a primis parentibus derivata" (*Summa* II. 2^{dæ}, Q. clxiv. A. 2).

S. Epiphanius interprets Isa. lxvi. 7 of the mystery of the Virgin-Birth (see *Anaceph.* 1136). Dr. Frank follows him here: "*And she brought forth.—Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain, she was delivered of a Man-child.* So prophesied Isaiah, and so the Fathers do apply it. She conceived without corruption, and brought forth without sorrow—the very text bears witness to it. *She wrapped It in the swaddling clothes and laid It in the Manger*, says S. Luke. She who needed not the help of man to conceive, needed no help of woman to bring forth: no corruption, no sorrow. A great mystery—none ever like it" (Frank's *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 85).

Canon Liddon expresses the view of S. Thomas (which is based on Catholic consent) in his *Christmas-tide Sermons*. He speaks of "our Lord's preternatural Birth" (p. 96), and says that our Lord's "supernatural Birth of a Virgin-Mother was in keeping with the high and unique office of His Manhood" (p. 114). He further alludes to the Virgin-Birth, as distinct from the Virgin-Conception, as follows: "How was the entrance of such a Being into this our world so to be marked as to show that He did not originally owe existence to a human parent? We could not have dared to answer such a question beforehand; but we can see how it is answered by our Lord's Birth of a Virgin. Was it not natural that Nature should thus suspend her laws to welcome the approach and the blessing of her Maker?" (pp. 97, 98).

The suspension of the laws of our fallen nature in the circumstances of the Virgin-Birth are just as much to be demanded as in the Virgin-Conception. But the Virgin-Birth involves a deeper mystery than the mere remission of "the pain and peril of child-birth"; for such "pain and peril" as that which accompanies an ordinary human birth could not, by any possible perversity of reasoning, be attached to the entrance of the Incarnate Word into the sphere of human life. The universal judgment of the Catholic Church in every age has testified to the fact that the Virgin-Birth was a physical mystery just as much as the Virgin-Conception. As a Virgin the Blessed Θεοτόκος conceived, and as a Virgin she bore the Incarnate Word, whose mode of birth was as mysterious as His Conception, so that, so far as her body was concerned, she was *Virgo pariens*, even as she was *Virgo concipiens*. We may here revert to the "three mysteries" of S. Ignatius—namely, the miraculous Conception, the miraculous Birth, and the miraculous Atoning Death of our Blessed Lord.

Mystery of the Virgin-Birth.

The Three Mysteries of S. Ignatius.

We may add to what has previously been said, that those who accept the mystery of the Virgin-Conception, and yet attempt to abolish the mystery of the Virgin-Birth, by substituting for it an ordinary human birth, are profoundly illogical. The mystery of our Lord's entrance into the Virgin's womb demands a parallel mystery in the mode of His passage out from it at His Birth into the world. They are forced to misconstrue the obvious meaning of the words of S. Ignatius. They have to reduce his "three mysteries" to *two*—namely, the mystery of the Virgin-Conception, and the mystery of our Lord's Atoning Death. It is *prima facie* impossible thus to blend the two first "mysteries" of S. Ignatius, and combine them into *one*, because the *first* "mystery," that of the Virgin-Conception, is described as ἡ παρθενία Μαρίας, a term which is distinct from that which implies the *second* "mystery" of the supernatural Virgin-Birth (ὁ τοκετὸς αὐτῆς); so that it is impossible to imagine that the post-Reformation idea of an ordinary human birth could have ever entered into the mind of S. Ignatius, or of the Fathers who quote his words,¹ as being a conceivable explanation of the "mystery" of our Lord's passage from His Mother's womb; a marvel which S. Ignatius sets on a level with the stupendous "mystery" of the Atonement. The Catholic Church, from the first, discovered the mystery of the Virgin-Birth as well as that of the Virgin-Conception in the prophecy of Isa. vii. To discuss adequately the patristic references to this passage would take more space than can be afforded to it. It will be enough to adopt and

¹ Bishop Lightfoot says (in his *Apostolic Fathers*, in *loc.* p. 76): "This passage is more frequently quoted by the Fathers than any other in the Ignatian Epistles. It is cited or referred to by Origen (*Hom. in Luc.* vi., *Opp.* iii. p. 938 A), by Eusebius (*Quæst. ad Steph.* i., *Op.* iv. p. 881), by Basil (*Hom. in Sanct. Chr. Gen.* iii., *Op.* ii. p. 598 B), by Jerome (*Comm. in Matt.* I. par. i.), by Andreas Cretensis (*Hom. in Nativ. B. V. M.* ii.), and Timotheus of Alexandria."

illustrate the conclusions of S. Thomas on the words of

Isaiah, and upon the Virgin-Birth generally.
The conclusions of S. Thomas. S. Thomas says that "it must be asserted without any doubt that the Mother of Christ was

a Virgin even in the act of bringing forth ; for the Prophet does not only say : *Behold, the Virgin shall conceive* ; but he also adds : *and she shall bear a Son*" (Isa. vii. 14).¹

He is here in accord with S. Irenæus on the same passage, who says : "Wherefore also the Lord Himself gave us a sign : one which man dared not ask for, because he never expected that a Virgin could conceive, or that it was possible *that one remaining a Virgin* could bring forth a Son" (*Hær.* iv. 19).²

With regard to the Purification and Presentation of our Lord in the Temple, S. Thomas says : "Christ went forth from the closed womb of the Virgin and opened it not, and therefore He ought not to have been presented in the Temple in accordance with this law" (Exod. xiii. 2).³ The Blessed Virgin also needed no purification, but "as Christ, although not liable to the law, nevertheless willed to undergo circumcision and the other burdens of the law to set an example of humility and obedience, for the same reason He willed that His Mother

¹ "Respondeo dicendum quod absque omni dubio asserendum est, Matrem Christi etiam in partu virginem fuisse : nam Propheta non solum dicit : *Ecce Virgo concipiet*, sed etiam addit : *Et pariet Filium*" (Isa. vii. 14) (*Summa* III. Q. xxviii. A. ii.).

² S. Athanasius follows the interpretation of S. Irenæus. "Προφῆται μὲν γὰρ ἄνωθεν περὶ τοῦ κατὰ τὴν Παρθένον Θαύματος (i.e. the supernatural Conception and Birth included as one idea), καὶ τῆς ἐξ αὐτῆς γενομένης γεννήσεως (the act of birth) προεμήνουν λέγοντες· Ἴδού ἡ Παρθένος ἐν γαστρὶ ἔξει καὶ τέξεται υἱόν, καὶ καλέσουσι τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἐμμανουήλ, ὃ ἐστὶ μεθερμηνεύμενον, Μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ Θεός" (*De Incarn.* c. 33).

³ "Sed Christus exivit de clauetro Virginis utero, et ita Matris vulvam non aperuit. Ergo Christus ex hac lege non debuit in templo offerri" (*Summa* III. Q. xxxvii. A. 3.).

should fulfil the observances of the law, although she was not liable to them . . . for as far as she was personally concerned she needed no purgation.”¹ The post-Reformation

The Virgin-Birth and Docetism.

advocates of the theory that the Virgin-Birth of our Lord was an ordinary human birth, advance one consideration which must be fairly

met. They say that if our Lord's Birth was physically a miracle, *salva integritate Matris*, it is impossible to maintain that our Lord's Body was truly human. They say that the Church cannot maintain the *reality* of our Lord's Humanity against Docetism, if our Lord's Birth was not in all respects conformed to the ordinary physical process whereby fallen “mankind is increased.” But they forget that the Catholic Church condemned Docetism by the very mouths of those

S. Ignatius refutes Docetism.

Fathers who uphold the “mystery” of the Virgin-Birth. S. Ignatius, who asserts this “mystery” so clearly, also combats Docetism

by asserting that our Lord was “truly born” (*Trall.* 9) ; ἀληθῶς here, as Bishop Lightfoot observes, is the “watch-word against Docetism.” Again S. Ignatius used the word in the phrase “truly born of a Virgin” (*Smyrn.* 1) and in other passages asserts his position as the chief opponent of Docetism in the early part of the second century. Hippolytus ascribes the origin of this heresy to Simon Magus (*Refut.* vi. 14), and S. John's words (1 Ep. iv. 3) were

¹ “Et ideo sicut Christus, licet non esset legi obnoxius, voluit tamen circumcisionem et alia legis onera subire, ad demonstrandum humilitatis et obedientiæ exemplum, . . . propter easdem rationes voluit et Matrem suam implere legis observantias, quibus tamen non erat obnoxia” (*Summa* III. Q. xxxvii. A. 4).

Bishop Ken's lines on the Purification echo the thoughts of S. Thomas :

“No ear can well endure
Purification of a Mother Pure. . . .
The Mighty Child, she knew,
To all God's laws would yield submission due.”

undoubtedly directed against it. Vincent of Lirin¹ groups together Valentinus, Eutyches, Saturninus, Marcion, Cerdo, and Manichæus, as teachers of practical Docetism. The Œcumenical Councils and the later Fathers condemned the Docetism of these heretics as plainly as S. Ignatius did, and they asserted the "mystery" of the Virgin-Birth in terms just as clear as his. The argument, if such it can be called, that the "mystery" of the entrance of our Lord into this world *salva integritate Matris*, involves *Docetism* is in the face of evidence absolutely worthless. S. Thomas, however, with his usual thoroughness of treatment, notices and confutes it. He states it, first of all, so as to give it a fair hearing.

The opponents' view stated by S. Thomas. "There ought to be nothing in the mystery of Christ by means of which His Body might

appear to be a *phantom* (the Docetic theory).

But to pass through that which is closed does not seem to befit a *true* body, but rather befits a body which is a phantom, because two bodies cannot be in the same place at once. Therefore the Body of Christ ought not to have come forth from the closed womb of His Mother. And so it was not fitting that she should be a virgin in the act of bringing forth."² S. Thomas here exactly expresses the ordinary Protestant view of our Lord's Birth.

But he states it only to crush it. He quotes a striking comment by our "English Doctor," the Venerable Bede³

¹ "Valentinus, Eutyches, Saturninus, Marcion, Cerdo, et Manichæus *phantasiæ predicatores*. Aiunt Filium Dei Deum et personam hominis non substantive exstitisse, sed actu putativo quodam et conversatione simulasse" (*Contr. Hær. cxx.*).

² "Nihil in mysterio Christi esse debuit per quod corpus Eius phantasticum appareret. Sed hoc non videtur vero corpori, sed phantastico convenire, ut possit per claustra transire, eo quod duo corpora simul esse non possunt. Non igitur debuit ex Matris utero clauso corpus Christi prodire. Et ita non decuit quod esset virgo in partu" (*Summa III. Q. xxviii. A. 2.*).

³ The Venerable Bede says that the words of S. Luke ii. 22 do

on the words of S. Luke ii. 22, which repeat the Levitical Law; and further says that by the "mystery" of His Virgin-Birth our Lord "willed so to demonstrate the reality of His Body at the same time that His Godhead was made manifest; and thus He mingled miracles with humiliations. Whence, that He might show that His *Body* was *real*" (against Docetism), "He is born of a *woman*; but that He might show that His Godhead was *real*, He is born of a *Virgin*, for

S. Thomas asserts the mystery of the Virgin-Birth.

'*Such a Birth befits God,*' as Ambrose saith in the Hymn of the Nativity."¹ S. Thomas, however, is careful to assert that our Lord's mysterious Birth was not an exercise of the gift of *subtilitas*, which belongs to the glorified body in its perfect consummation and bliss, any more than His walking on the sea was an exercise of the *agilitas* of the glorified Body.

S. Thomas also asserts the reality of the Manhood of our Lord.

But he recognises that our Lord's Human Body, notwithstanding the *truth* and *reality* of His Manhood, could transcend the laws of nature, as being the Body of the Second Adam, and *exempt from sin*. Our Lord's Body was no Docetic phantom when He willed to supersede the law of gravity by walking on the sea of Galilee. Neither was it a Docetic phantom when He was transfigured, or when He

not apply the normal rule of human birth to our Lord's Birth: "non quod Dominus sacri ventris hospitium quod *ingressus* sanctificaverat, *egressus* devirginasse credendus est" (Cap. viii. in *Luc.*).

¹ "Ita Christus voluit veritatem sui corporis demonstrare quod etiam simul Eius Divinitas declararetur: et ideo permiscuit *mira humilibus*. Unde ut corpus Eius *verum* ostenderetur, nascitur ex *femina*; sed ut ostenderetur Eius *Divinitas*, nascitur ex *Virgine*. '*Talis enim partus decet Deus,*' ut Ambrosius dicit in hymno Nativitatis."

He also applies Isaiah vii. to the Virgin-Birth, as well as to the Virgin-Conception in words which have already been quoted.

passed through the crowds unperceived. It was not as a *spirit* that He passed through the closed doors after His Resurrection. Nor was it by virtue of the *subtilitas* of the Body glorified; for our Lord, after passing through the closed doors, said: "*Handle Me and see. A spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me have*" (S. Luke xxiv. 39). It was by a similar suspension of natural law that our Lord, in His preternatural Birth, passed through the closed door of the Virgin's womb. "All these things," says S. Thomas, "were wrought miracu-

S. Augustine compares the Virgin-Birth with the Resurrection.

lously by Divine Power. Whence Augustine saith: '*The closed doors formed no obstacle to the substance of that Body in which the Godhead was; for He, at Whose birth the virginity of His Mother remained inviolate, could enter them when they were not opened*'" (*Super Ioann. tract. 121*).¹

The patristic evidence for the "mystery" of the Virgin-Birth fully bears out the conclusions of S. Thomas. S.

S. Ambrose.

Ambrose interprets Isaiah vii. as S. Irenæus had done before him. "This is the Virgin who

conceived in her womb, and, as a Virgin, bore a Son. For so it is written, '*Behold, the Virgin shall conceive in her womb, and shall bring forth a Son.*' For the Prophet said that not only she should conceive as a Virgin, but that as a Virgin she should bring forth.² In the same letter³ he says that "she who was able to conceive as

¹ "Et ideo dicendum est quod omnia ista facta sunt miraculose per virtutem divinam. Unde Augustinus dicit (*Super Ioann. tract. 121*), *Moli corporis, ubi Divinitas erat, ostia clausa non obstiterunt; Ille quippe non eis apertis intrare potuit, Quo nascente virginitas Matris inviolata permansit*" (*Summa III. Q. xxviii, A. 2*).

² "Hæc est Virgo quæ in utero concepit, Virgoque peperit filium. Sic enim scriptum est, *Ecce Virgo in utero concipiet, et pariet filium*. Non enim concepturam tantummodo Virginem, sed et parituram Virginem dixit" (S. Ambr. *Ep. vii. ad Siricum*).

³ "Quæ potuit Virgo concipere, potuit Virgo generare" (*Ibid.*).

a Virgin was able to bring forth as a Virgin." S. Basil says of the same prophecy: "The same woman was born Virgin and Mother; both abiding in the consecration of her virginity, and inheriting the blessing of her Child-bearing."¹

S. Augustine asserts the mystery of the Virgin-Birth in a passage which also witnesses against Docetism. S. Augustine on the Virgin-Birth. "For by the Gift of God—that is, by the Holy Spirit—so great a humiliation of so great a God was vouchsafed to us, that he deigned to take upon Him perfect Manhood in the Virgin's womb, the body of His Mother remaining inviolate while He dwelt within it, and continuing inviolate as He left it, which temporal dispensation is assailed by the craft of heretics in many ways. But whoever holds the Catholic Faith, believing that the Word of God took upon Him perfect manhood—that is, body, soul, and spirit—is sufficiently fortified against them."² He also interprets Isaiah vii. in the same way as S. Irenæus, S. Ambrose, S. Basil, and the rest of the Fathers. He quotes the whole passage, and says: "Ye shall therefore have no doubt that the Virgin could bring forth, if ye will to believe that God could be born and come unto men in the flesh, without giving up the governance of the universe, and could give to His Mother the power of bringing forth without taking away her virginity."³ Again, he says that

¹ "Ἡ αὐτὴ γυνὴ καὶ παρθένος καὶ μήτηρ, καὶ ἐν τῷ ἁγιασμῷ τῆς παρθενίας μένουσα, καὶ τὴν τῆς τεκνογονίας εὐλογίαν κληρονομοῦσα" (S. Basil, *Homil.* xxviii).

² "Dono etiam Dei, hoc est, Sancto Spiritu concessa nobis est tanta humilitas tanti Dei, ut totum hominem suscipere dignaretur in utero Virginis, maternum corpus integrum inhabitans, integrum deserens. Cui temporali dispensationi multis modis insidiantur hæretici. Sed si quis tenuerit Catholicam fidem, ut totum hominem credat a Verbo Dei esse susceptum, id est, corpus, animam, spiritum, satis contra illos munitus est" (*De Fide et Sym.* 8).

³ "Ecce Virgo . . . Nobiscum Deus. Non ergo dubitabitis Virginem

our Lord quenched all pride of earthly nobility, since He was "born of a Mother who, although she had conceived without being defiled by a man, and ever had remained undefiled (a Virgin in conceiving, a Virgin in her bringing forth, and a Virgin until her death), was yet married to a workman."¹ In explaining the Creed he says: "And this very Birth as Man was at once humble and exalted. Whence was it humble? Because He was born as Man from men" (*i.e.* from the line of Abraham and David). "Whence was it exalted? Because He was born of a Virgin. A Virgin conceived, a Virgin brought forth, and after the Birth remained a Virgin."² S. Augustine anticipated the materialising objection of Whitby, with regard to our Lord's passing through the *closed doors* after His Resurrection. He says that objectors argue that if our Lord's Body was *real*, it could not pass through *closed doors*. But S. Augustine replies that it was a *miracle*. "If you understand *how* it came about, then it is no miracle. Consider the miracles of your Lord from the beginning, and give me an explanation of each of them. No man came near, and yet a Virgin conceived. Give me an explanation of *how* the Virgin conceived. . . . Where there is a failure of *explanation*, there it is that there is a *building up* of faith. You have one miracle in the Lord's Conception. *Hear also of one in His Birth.* A Virgin brought forth Christ, and a Virgin she

parientem, si velitis credere Deum nascentem; mundi regimen non relinquentem, et ad homines in carne venientem; Matri fœcunditatem afferentem, integritatem non auferentem" (*De Fide Rer. quæ non vid. 5*).

¹ "Natus enim de Matre, quæ quamvis a viro intacta conceperit, semperque intacta permanserit, Virgo concipiens, Virgo pariens, Virgo moriens, tamen fabro desponsata erat" (*De Catech. Rud. 40*).

² "Et ipsa nativitas humana, humilis et excelsa. Unde humilis? Quia homo natus est ex hominibus. Unde excelsa? Quia de Virgine. Virgo concepit, Virgo peperit, et post partum Virgo remansit" (*Sermo ad Catech. 7*).

remained. Even then the Lord, *before He rose again*, was born *through closed doors*" (*Serm. ccxlvii. par. 2*).

We find this comparison between the physical mystery of our Lord's Birth, and the physical mystery of His passing through the closed doors after His Resurrection, elsewhere in the Fathers. It shows that the mystery of the Virgin-Birth was taught as plainly as the Resurrection mystery.

S. Jerome on the mystery of the Virgin-Birth. S. Jerome must have had this comparison in his mind when he said: "Christ alone opened the closed doors of the Virgin's womb, which at the same time had remained perpetually closed."¹ S.

S. Chrysostom on the same. Chrysostom expresses the same idea: "Christ came forth from the womb, and the womb remained closed" (literally, unloosed).² The well-known

Rufinus on Ezek. xlv. 1. Commentary of Rufinus on the Apostles' Creed was written about A.D. 400. He says: "And just as in the sanctification of the Holy Ghost no thought of frailty is to be admitted, so in the Virgin-Birth no defilement is to be imagined. For this Birth was a new gift to this world, and rightly new. For He Who is the Only Son in Heaven is, in an accordant manner, the Only Son on earth, and is born as no other ever was or can be. . . . The prophet Ezekiel too had predicted the miraculous manner of that Birth, calling Mary figuratively *the Gate of the Lord*—the Gate, that is to say, by which the Lord entered the world. For he saith: '*The Gate which looks towards the East shall be closed, and shall not be opened, and no one shall pass through it, because the Lord of Israel shall pass through it, and it shall be closed.*'"³ What could be said

¹ "Solus Christus clausas portas vulvæ virginalis aperuit, quæ tamen clausæ iugiter permanserant" (S. Jerome *adv. Pelag. 2*).

² "Ὁ Χριστὸς προῆλθεν ἐκ μήτρας, καὶ ἄλυτος ἐμείνεν ἡ μήτρα" (S. Chrysostom, *Hom. cxlii.*).

³ This interpretation of Ezek. xlv. 2 has become a matter of Catholic consent, and is common to the Fathers.

S. Ambrose says: "Quæ est hæc porta nisi Maria? . . . per quam

with more evident a reference to the inviolate preservation of the Virgin's condition? That Gate of Virginitas was closed: through it the Lord God of Israel entered" (*i.e.* at the Annunciation); "through it He came forth from the Virgin's womb into the world; and the Virgin state being preserved inviolate, the gate of the Virgin remained closed for ever."¹

The Commentary on the Athanasian Creed which Water-land ascribes to Venantius Fortunatus is probably a sixth-century document of uncertain authorship. But it is convenient to retain the name of Fortunatus as its author, notwithstanding the

Fortunatus on
the closed
Gate.

Christus intravit in hunc mundum, quando virginali fusus est partu, et genitalia virginitatis claustra non solvit" (*De Inst. Virg.* cap. viii.).

S. Jerome interprets this passage of Ezekiel in the same way (*Ad Pammach.* Ep. xlviii.).

S. John Damascene alludes to it as follows: "And as when conceived He kept her who conceived Him a Virgin, so when He was born He kept her virginity unscathed, alone passing through it, and keeping it shut. For He was not unable to pass through the gate and yet keep the seals of it unscathed" (*De Fide Orthodox.* iv. 4).

S. Proclus (Patriarch of Constantinople, A.D. 434) says: "But so He came forth from the womb as He entered through the hearing" (*i.e.* the Annunciation). "So was He born, as He was conceived. Impassibly He entered, incorruptibly He came forth, according to the prophet Ezekiel: 'The Lord turned me to the outer gate of the Sanctuary, and it was shut. And the Lord said unto me, the gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no one shall pass through it, but the Lord God of Israel alone. He shall enter in and come forth, and the gate shall be shut.' Behold a clear demonstration of Mary the Mother of God" (*Ap. Merc.* ii, p. 24).

¹ "Et sicut in sanctificatione Spiritus Sancti nulla sentienda est fragilitas, ita et in partu Virginis nulla intelligenda est corruptio. Novus enim huic sæculo datus est hic partus, nec immerito. Qui enim in cœlis unicus Filius est, consequenter et in terra unicus est, et unice nascitur. . . . Sed et partus ipsius mirabilem modum Ezechiel Propheta ante formaverat, Mariam figuraliter Portam Domini nominans, per quam scilicet Dominus ingressus est mundum. Dicit ergo hoc modo, *Porta autem quæ respicit ad Orientem clausa erit, et non*

uncertainty. This Commentary says: "Christ Jesus, God and Man, is the only Son of God, and in His own Person the Son of the Virgin. Because, whilst the Godhead took manhood in the womb of the Virgin, the Son of the Virgin also entered the world with that manhood by being born through the gate of the Virgin still entire and inviolate."¹

The Tome of S. Leo forms part of the doctrinal definitions of the Œcumenical Council of Chalcedon (A D. 451). Its statements are therefore of binding authority upon the Catholic Church as a whole. Catholics in communion with the See of Canterbury are bound explicitly by the authority of the Œcumenical Councils, as has been previously shown. The Tome of S. Leo denounced the practical Docetism of Eutyches, by asserting at the same time the miracles of the Virgin-Conception and the Virgin-Birth, and the parallel truth of the reality of our Lord's Manhood. S. Leo says: "Did he (Eutyches) by any chance suppose that our Lord Jesus Christ was not of our nature, because, when the Angel was sent to Blessed Mary *Ever-Virgin*,² he said, *The Holy Ghost*

aperietur, et nemo transibit per eam, quoniam Dominus Deus Israel transibit per eam, et clausa erit. Quid tam evidens de conservatione Virginis dici poterat? Clausa fuit ea virginitatis porta: per ipsam intravit Dominus Deus Israel; per ipsam in hunc mundum de utero Virginis processit; et in æternum porta Virginis clausa, servata virginitate, permansit" (Rufinus, *Comm. in Symb. Ap.* cap. ix.).

S. Thomas has the same interpretation of this passage of Ezekiel (*Summa* III. Q. xxviii. A. 3).

¹ "Deus et homo Iesus Christus, unus Dei Filius et Ipse Virginis Filius. Quia dum Deitas in utero Virginis humanitatem adsumpsit, et cum ea per portam Virginis integram et illæsam nascendo mundum ingressus est Virginis Filius" (Heurtley, *De Fide et Symbolo*, p. 177).

² S. Athanasius (*Contr. Ar.* ii. 21) uses this title, which implies the Perpetual Virginity of the Blessed Virgin, as well as the mystery of the Virgin-Birth, in a sentence protesting against Docetism. "Let those who deny that the Son is from the Father, etc., also deny *ἀληθινὴν σάρκα ἀνθρωπίνην αὐτὸν εἰληφέναι ἐκ Μαρίας τῆς ἀειπαρθένου.*" Then, he says,

shall come upon thee . . . it could be that *because* He Who was conceived of the Virgin was conceived by Divine operation, *therefore* His Flesh was not of the nature of her who conceived Him? He quotes Isaiah vii., of the Virgin bearing a Son, and he unites the mysteries of the Virgin-Conception and Virgin-Birth as follows: "For we could not gain the victory over the author of sin and death, unless He Whom neither sin could defile nor death hold had taken our nature and made it His own. For He was conceived by the Holy Ghost within the womb of His Virgin-Mother, who brought Him forth with her virginity preserved even as she had conceived Him with her virginity preserved."¹

The Council in Trullo (A.D. 692) passed disciplinary Canons which had wide authority. In the East The Council in Trullo. a social custom of baking fine wheat-flour cakes after a birth and distributing them to the friends of the parents was in some parts observed. Some ignorant Christians had carried this social observance into their Christianity, and had baked their "birth-cakes" on the day after Christmas, in honour of the Divine Maternity.

The Council in Trullo found it necessary to forbid this practice, because it levelled the mystery of the Virgin-Birth with an ordinary human birth. The Seventy-ninth Canon

they deny the Incarnation absolutely. The title *δειπαρόθενος* as applied to the Blessed Virgin is found in S. Epiphanius. *Hær.* lxxviii.; Didymus. *Trin.* i. 27; Rufinus; *Fid.* i. 43; Lepor. ap. Cassian. *Incarn.* i. 5; and in the Acts of subsequent General Councils.

¹ "An forte ideo putavit Dominum nostrum Iesum Christum non nostræ esse naturæ, quia missus ad Beatam Mariam *semper Virginem* Angelus ait, *Spiritus Sanctus superveniet in te . . .* ut quia Conceptus Virginis divini fuit operis, non de natura concipientis fuerit caro concepti. Non enim superare possemus peccati et mortis auctorem, nisi naturam nostram Ille susciperet, et suam faceret, Quem nec peccatum contaminare, nec mors potuit detenere. Conceptus quippe est de Spiritu Sancto intra uterum Matris Virginis, quæ Illum *ita salva virginitate edidit, quemadmodum salva virginitate concepit*" (S. Leon. P. ad Flav. Ep. cap. ii.).

says: "We decree that henceforth nothing of the kind be done by the faithful. For this is not honouring the Virgin (who above all thought and speech bore in the flesh the incomprehensible Word) when we define and describe from ordinary things, and from *such as occur with ourselves*, her Ineffable Parturition."¹

We see that the witness of the Catholic Church in every age testifies to the truth of the "mystery" of the Virgin-Birth, as well as of the Virgin-Conception. The Caroline Divines plainly taught this mystery. They received it as a truth held by the universal consent of the Church, and finally established by the authority of the Œcumenical Council of Chalcedon.

Bishop Andrewes says: "The light cometh through the glass, yet the glass is not perished. No more did the God of Heaven, by His passage, violate in any whit the virginity of His Mother."²

Bishop Jeremy Taylor says of the Virgin-Birth: "For to

¹ Van Espen quotes the eminent Greek canonist Zonaras on this Trullan Canon: "Definit Zonaras puerperium de quo agit Canon quod sit emissio foetus quam doloris sensus . . . comitatur. Quibus quidem malis, ait, *nullatenus obnoxiam fuisse Deiparam credimus.*" Van Espen proceeds: "Sane credimus et nos Deiparam sine ullo doloris sensu divinum suum fructum enixum esse, ideoque *nec more aliarum mulierum puerperium* subiisse." Van Espen wrote at the beginning of the eighteenth century, when traditional views were questioned, and for this reason his witness is worth recording.

We have already quoted Decree VII. of the Council of Bethlehem (A.D. 1672), which embodies the doctrinal standards of Eastern Orthodoxy, and witnesses to the mystery of the Virgin-Birth (*γεννηθέντα χωρὶς τοῦ . . . τὴν παρθενίαν αὐτῆς διασεῖσαι*).

² Bishop Andrewes's *Sermons*, p. 74, ed. 1629. Cornelius à Lapide has the same thought as Bishop Andrewes: "As she conceived, so she brought forth, remaining a Virgin, so that Christ was born while the womb of His Mother was closed, and penetrated as the rays of the sun through glass." So, too, the old Christmas carol, "Forth He came as Light through glass."

her alone did not the punishment of Eve extend that *in* Bishop Jeremy *sorrow she should bring forth*: for where nothing Taylor. of sin was an ingredient, there misery cannot cohabit. There was nothing in this but the sanctification of the Virgin's womb, and *that* could not be the parent of sorrow, especially that gate not having been opened, by which the curse always entered. . . . And He that came from his grave fast tied with a stone and a signature, and into the college of Apostles, *the doors being shut*, . . . came also (as the Church piously believes) into the world so, without doing any violence to the virginal and pure body of His Mother; that He also did leave her virginity entire, *to be as a seal*, that none might open the gate of that sanctuary, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet: 'This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it; because the Lord God of Israel hath entered by it, therefore it shall be shut' (Ezek. lxiv.)" (*Life of Jesus Christ, Works*, vol. ii. p. 21).

Dr. Frank says of our Lord's Manhood that it was "little lower than the Angels," "when He could pass through a crowd of people as invisible as an immaterial spirit. Nay, before that, when He came into the world without any blemish to His Mother's Virginity, . . . and after that, when He arose out of His Tomb, the Stone upon it; when He entered and the doors were shut; when He vanished out of sight—they knew not how He went. But S. Austin tells you more, *Natura humana Christi, Deum solum maiorem*" (*Contr. Maxim. lib. iii. cap. 25*) (Frank's *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 188). Again he says: "Light enters through solid bodies, as glass, crystal, or the like, without either penetration of dimensions or cracking the glass. So Christ from the virgin body of Blessed Mary, without the least hurt to her virginity" (*Ibid.* p. 209).

Dr. Isaac Barrow says of the Virgin Birth : " Who can do otherwise than adore Him that was born in a manner so *glorious* and *miraculous* ? " (*Works*, vol. vi. p. 489).

Bishop Pearson says : " That she was a Virgin, not only while she was with child, but even when she had brought forth, is also evident from his (S. Matthew's) application of the prophecy, '*Behold, a Virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a Son.*' For by the same prediction it is as manifest that a Virgin should bring forth, as conceive a Son " (*On the Creed*, vol. i. p. 271).

We may add one more testimony from a modern Anglican theologian :—

" While our Lord is thus, in a true and proper sense, Man, the method of his human birth differed from that of other men. He derived His human substance from a mother only. *That Mother remained a virgin when He was conceived and born* " (Darwell Stone, *Outlines of Dogma*, p. 69).

In concluding the evidence of Catholic consent for the ineffable mystery of the Virgin-Birth, we may use the words of the Psalmist, so aptly quoted by Dr. Farrar : " Thou art He Who tookest Me out of My Mother's womb." Our Lord has made known to us, through the witness of the Gospels and the Church, the fact that He was born by the miraculous power of God in a manner which passeth man's understanding.

(γ) *Virgo Moriens.*

The evidence already adduced for the virginity of the Θεοτόκος in the Conception and Birth of our Lord fitly and conclusively prepares the way for the consideration of the universal belief of the Church that she was ἀειπαθὲν, as she is called by S. Athanasius. The doctrine of the ἀειπαρθενία, as expressed

The witness of
Ecumenical
Councils.

in the Tome of S. Leo, was stamped with œcumenical authority by the Council of Chalcedon, and we subsequently find it repeated in the Decrees of the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Œcumenical Councils. The Fifth Œcumenical Council was held at Constantinople in A.D. 553. It was convoked to condemn the Nestorian tendencies of Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret of Cyrus, and the letter of Ibas, Bishop of Edessa, to Maris, which also denied the *Communicatio Idiomatum*. The condemnation of the *Tria Capitula* is a long story, and it only touches our present subject so far as it involves the teaching of the Church on the subject of the Blessed Virgin. The veiled heresy of the *Three Chapters* necessarily touched the truth of the Incarnation, and it was therefore likely that the Council would assert that the Blessed Virgin was ἀειπαρθένος, and quite certain that it would assert the Ephesine doctrine of the Θεοτόκος.

The Blessed Virgin is described as “*Ever-Virgin*” no less than *four* times in the acts and documents of the Fifth Œcumenical Council.

The Fifth
Œcumenical
Council.

(i) In the Decree condemning the *Three Chapters* the words occur: “We condemn the impious letter which Ibas is said to have written, which denies that God the Word was Incarnate of the Holy Mother of God and *Ever-Virgin* Mary.”

(ii) In the second *Capitulum* it is said that our Lord was made Man ἐκ τῆς ἁγίας ἐνδόξου Θεοτόκου καὶ ἀειπαρθένου Μαρίας.

(iii) The sixth *Capitulum* condemns the denial of the title Θεοτόκος τὴν ἁγίαν ἐνδοξὸν ἀειπαρθένον Μαρían.

(iv) This phrase is repeated in the fourteenth *Capitulum*. The Decretal Epistle of Pope Vigilius, confirming and accepting the Decrees of the Fifth Council, contains the title “*Ever-Virgin*” as applied to the Θεοτόκος.

The Sixth Œcumenical Council dealt with the Monothelite heresy, and was held at Constantinople in A.D. 680. The

letter of Pope Agatho to the Council conveyed the decision of himself and a hundred and twenty-five Bishops present at a Western Council held at Rome, and in it occur the words, "the Holy, Immaculate, *Ever-Virgin*, and Glorious Mary." This letter became the basis of the dogmatic Decree of the Council. In A.D. 692 the Council in Trullo was held. We have already dealt with its Seventy-ninth Canon, and, although its disciplinary decrees are not of œcumenical authority, its first Canon, which reaffirms all the decisions of the first Six Œcumenical Councils, has always been so regarded.¹ And this first Canon bears on our point in describing the Θεοτόκος as "the Immaculate *Ever-Virgin*."

The Iconoclasts.

The Iconoclastic controversy has been strangely mistaken for a doctrinal revolt by ordinary Protestants. The Iconoclasts were courtly Erastians, who were also partly influenced by the reaction against symbolism which characterised Mahometanism. Dean Milman and Archbishop Trench² speak of the "irremediable weakness" of Iconoclasm as a "mere negative doctrine." But the Iconoclasts did not venture to break with Catholic consent in such a matter as the ἀειπαρθενία. The "Pseudo-Council" of the Iconoclasts, which was held at Constantinople in A.D. 754, involved an anathema on all who did not confess that "the Holy Ever-Virgin Mary was higher than any created being whether visible or invisible."

The Seventh Œcumenical Council was held at Nicæa in A.D. 787.³ The Decree of the Seventh Œcumenical Council against the Iconoclasts contains the phrase, "Immaculate Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary," and the same phrase occurs in the

The Seventh Œcumenical Council.

¹ Professor Michaud, *Discussion sur les Sept Conciles Œcuméniques*, p. 272.

² Archbishop Trench, *Mediæval Church History*, p. 99.

³ The mistake made by the Western Bishops at the Council of

letter of the Council to the Empress Irene announcing its decree against the Iconoclasts.

We might well close our argument for *Virgo moriens* at this stage. The Catholic Church has spoken by the voice of her Œcumenical Councils, and has declared the truth of the Perpetual Virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, just as clearly as she has proclaimed the truth of the Incarnation by declaring her to be Θεοτόκος. It is of course a plain

Relative
importance of
the titles
Θεοτόκος and
ἀειπαρθένος.

fact that the doctrinal importance of the title Θεοτόκος infinitely transcends the importance of the truth conveyed by the title ἀειπαρθένος. The judgment of the Church as to the relative

importance of the truths she teaches, and the relative danger of the heresies she rejects, does not minimise the force of any fact which she has declared to be true. The relative value of a certain truth, as compared with other truths, does not make it the less true. The heresy of denying the ἀειπαρθενία of the Blessed Virgin subsequent to our Lord's Birth, does not touch the Incarnation in the same direct way as the heresies of Cerinthus, Nestorius, and Eutyches. But it was treated by the Church as a heresy dishonouring to the Blessed Virgin directly, and to our Lord indirectly. The Church did not disparage marriage by affirming the

Frankfort, owing to the want of a suitable and exact Latin rendering of προσκύνησις, the word used to describe the lawful reverence due to the sacred Eikons, caused a delay in the acceptance of the Seventh Œcumenical Council in the West. Dr. Neale and Sir W. Palmer, amongst Anglicans, have raised doubts about this Seventh Council, but their objections have little weight, and are conclusively disproved by a clear and lucid article on the Seventh Œcumenical Council in the *Church Quarterly Review* for July 1896. It is interesting to note that Richard Field (Dean of Gloucester in 1610), a link between the Elizabethan and Caroline Divines, declares his belief that the Seventh General Council is truly Œcumenical (Field's *Book of the Church*, v. chap. 51). Thorndike takes the same view (vol. iv. 2, p. 791). Dr. Percival, in his *Seven Œcumenical Councils* (p. 524), gives an excellent summary of the arguments which prove that this Council is œcumenical.

ἀειπαρθεμία of the Blessed Virgin. The fact that she asserts

The assertion of the ἀειπαρθεμία does not disparage marriage. Holy Marriage to be a Sacrament which is a type of the mystical union between Christ and His Church is answer enough to such a charge. But the special vocation of the virgin state, and

the gift of continency which God gives with it, certainly mark out and separate persons for special ministries in the Church of God which cannot be carried out by married persons. It is idle to deny that the vocation of virginity is set forth by the Church and Holy Scripture as a "Counsel of Perfection." It is plainly commended as a means of serving God and His Church upon a higher level of self-devotion and concentrated energy than is possible to married persons. On the other hand it must be admitted that S. Jerome and others, in the reaction against Pagan luxury and incontinence, fell into exaggeration in their praises of virginity. But this was no excuse for the heretics who denied the ἀειπαρθεμία, or for the revival of their heresy at the Reformation, when Luther's coarse obscenities in praise of marriage shocked his contemporaries, in an age of plain speech and lax morals.¹

The heresy of denying the ἀειπαρθεμία of the Blessed Virgin is linked with the name of Helvidius, S. Jerome and Helvidius. who affirmed, in a treatise published at Rome in the fourth century, that the "brethren of our Lord" were

¹ Luther's well-known sermon on Marriage was preached at Wittemberg in 1522. Professor J. B. Mozley says of it that it "gives licenses from which the natural conscience of a heathen and a savage would recoil" (*Essays*, vol. i. p. 401). "*Crescite et multiplicamini*" was Luther's text, and he applied it to the license of adultery and polygamy in language too foul to be quoted, even under the veil of the Latin in which he published it, though he preached it in German to an audience of both sexes. Luther's subsequent dispensation to Philip of Hesse to have two wives at once was the logical outcome of his sermon. His friend Staupitz left him after this sermon, and said: "Jactaris ab iis qui lupanaria colunt," which was true enough.

sons of S. Joseph and the Blessed Virgin. S. Jerome's famous reply was written in A.D. 383, and immediately became the basis of the Catholic treatment of the subject.

The acuteness of S. Jerome's arguments and the cogency of his reasoning have appealed strongly to modern scholars. Dr. F. A. von Lehner says that "all the erudition of modern philology has not brought us to any results other than those reached by S. Jerome with his acute textual comparisons, even if we are in a position to correct them in certain particulars" (*Die Marienverehrung*, etc., p. 112).¹

We have noted in a former chapter that both S. Jerome and S. Augustine maintained the celibate chastity of S. Joseph, in declaring that the brethren of the Lord were not his sons by a former wife, any more than they were the sons of the Blessed Virgin. This view was ultimately adopted by

¹ Another modern German scholar, Dr. P. Schegg, takes the same view, and upholds S. Jerome's contention that "the brethren of the Lord" were His kinsmen, and not the sons of S. Joseph by a former wife (*Jacobus, der Bruder des Herrn*, München, 1883). The Lutherans have not officially denied the ἀειπαρθενία, but practically most Lutherans are Helvidians, with the honourable exceptions of Bengel and Hengstenberg. Herder advocated the heresy of Helvidius in 1775. Blom and Schaf published books upholding it in 1839 and 1842. Laurent has advocated it in his *N. T. Studien*, published in 1866. The *Encyclopædia Biblica* is a modern work of positive heresy on some points, and doubtful orthodoxy on many others. It is Cerinthian with regard to the Person of our Lord, and naturally denies the ἀειπαρθενία. But heresies of this kind do not commit the Anglican Communion because some Anglicans have written heretical articles in the *Encyclopædia Biblica*. The same argument applies to the Helvidian article in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, which is unhappily written by an Anglican of Protestant tendencies. Dr. Harnack's denial of the Christ of the Creeds is well known. Therefore he is a Helvidian, and tries to show (in his *Apostles' Creed*, p. 22) that the ἀειπαρθενία "is rejected by the Evangelic Churches," which is difficult to square with the fact, that the early Lutherans agreed with the Articles of Peace at Schmalkald, which contained the words, "Maria Sancta, Semper Virgo."

Catholic consent as being most in harmony with reason, although the view of Epiphanius, that the "brethren of the Lord" were the sons of Joseph by a former wife, obtained some credence amongst the Greek Fathers until S. Chrysostom and Theodoret ultimately adopted S. Jerome's opinion. It is obvious that S. Epiphanius, equally with S. Jerome, maintained the Catholic doctrine of the *ἀειπαρθένα*. Two distinguished Cambridge Doctors have in recent times defended the *ἀειπαρθένα* from these differing points of view. Dr. Mill in

Dr. Mill
supported
S. Jerome.

1843 wrote a learned and exhaustive treatise adopting the view of S. Jerome, and basing it upon Catholic tradition and consent.¹ His work is specially valuable for its catena of post-Reformation Anglican Divines, whose statements prove that the Church of England has

Dr. Lightfoot
supported
S. Epiphanius.

maintained the Catholic tradition of the *ἀειπαρθένα*. Bishop Lightfoot of Durham defends the *ἀειπαρθένα* from the standpoint of Epiphanius in his learned essay on "The Brethren of the Lord" in his Commentary on the Galatians.² Both these treatises are worthy monuments of English theological

¹ *The Account of our Lord's Brethren*, etc., being *The Christian Advocate's* publication for 1843.

² Dr. Lightfoot's weighing of the evidence in favour of the Epiphanian view is not convincing, as against the joint verdict of S. Jerome and S. Augustine. S. Jerome says: "Nos autem fratres Domini non filios Ioseph, sed consobrinos Salvatoris, Mariæ liberos intelligimus materteræ Domini, quæ esse dicitur mater Iacobi minoris et Ioseph et Iudæ, quos in alio Evangelii loco fratres Domini legimus appellatos. Fratres autem consobrinos dici omnis Scriptura demonstrat" (*Comm. in Matt.* ii. 49). S. Augustine says: "Consanguinei Virginis Mariæ fratres Domini dicebantur. Erat autem consuetudinis Scripturarum appellare fratres quoslibet consanguineos et cognationis propinquos" (*Tract. xviii. in Ioann.*). Bishop Pearson accepts the view of the great Western Doctors, and says: "Nor need we thus assert that Joseph had any offspring, because the language of the Jews included in the name of brethren not only the strict relation of fraternity, but also

learning. There is no space to summarise their arguments.

Both alike uphold the adherence of the Church of England in our times to the doctrine of the *ἀειπαρθενία*. It is

true that some isolated individuals in Anglican Orders have revived the Helvidian heresy.¹ But their position does not affect the witness of the Anglican Communion, as a whole, any more than do the heresies on the Virgin-Birth and the Resurrection, which the Bishop of London denounced in his address to his Diocesan Conference in 1904, and in his sermon preached in the same year at Ely. The course of

the Helvidian heresy is interesting to trace. We find "Opposers of Mary" (Antidic-marianites) in Arabia at the latter part of the fourth century. Epiphanius (*Hær.* c. lxxviii.) opposed them in a passage cited in a previous chapter, to which may be added his opinion that their denial of the *ἀειπαρθενία* was derived from Apollinaris.² Subsequently the same heresy was taught by Jovinian, a monk of Milan, and by Bonosus, Bishop of Sardica in Illyria. Dr. Mill says very truly of these men "that they had no precursors in their sentiment respecting the Blessed Virgin but those much worse and thorough heretics who asserted Jesus to be the Son of Joseph and Mary." Bonosus, as a Bishop, was dealt with in the ordinary course of Church discipline. S. Ambrose

the larger of consanguinity. It is sufficient therefore that the Evangelists call the kindred of the Blessed Virgin the brethren and sisters of her only Son, which indeed is the most generally approved answer" (Pearson *On the Creed*, vol. i. p. 274). The phrase *ὁ τοῦ τέκτονος υἱός* in itself seems to exclude the idea that the "brethren" were also *οἱ τοῦ τέκτονος υἱοί*.

¹ Dr. Farrar has done so in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, and Professor Mayor in Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*.

² S. Epiphanius wrote as follows in A.D. 367: "Φασὶ δέ, ὡς ἂν ὡς μοι εἴρηται, ὅτι ἀπ' αὐτοῦ τοῦ πρεσβύτου Ἀπολλινάρου ἐξήρχηται ὁ λόγος, ἡ ἀπὸ τινων τῶν μεμαθητευμένων" (*Hær.* lxxviii. 1).

mentions his case as requiring discipline on account of his position. He considers that the other Antidicomarianites were too obscure to need any further treatment than silence. He says: "There have been some S. Ambrose on this heresy. who denied that the Blessed Virgin persevered in maintaining her virginity. Hitherto we have preferred to be silent in dealing with so great a sacrilege; but because the matter has been brought forward into our midst, by reason of the fact that even a Bishop has been found guilty of this lapse into heresy, we do not consider that it ought to be left uncondemned."¹

In A.D. 389 the Council of Capua took proceedings against Bonosus, and the case was referred to the Bishops of his own province for decision. They held a Council at Thessalonica in A.D. 390, and formally condemned him to suspension from his episcopal functions, for the heresy of denying the Perpetual Virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This heresy excited such horror in the minds of Catholics, that the question of the validity of ordinations conferred by Bonosus was raised. It was decided that the clergy ordained before his condemnation for denying the ἀειπαρθενία were to be received, but those ordained by him after his condemnation were to be rejected. He and his followers subsequently lapsed into the heresy of Photinus, which was a kind of Sabellianism. It was after this development of the Bonosians that S. Gregory the Great decided that their baptisms were invalid. In the earlier stage of their heresy, when they denied the ἀειπαρθενία alone, the Second Council of Arles decided (Canons XVI. and XVII.) that their baptisms were valid.

Jovinian was first condemned by a Synod at Rome in

¹ "Fuerunt qui eam (Mariam) negarent virginem perseverasse. Hoc tantum sacrilegium silere iamdudum maluimus: sed quia causa vocavit in medium, ita ut eius prolapsionis etiam Episcopus argueretur, indemnatum non putamus relinquendum" (*De Inst. Virg.* v. 35).

A.D. 390 for denying the ἀειπαρθένεια. S. Ambrose in the same year held the Third Council of Milan, Jovinian, which condemned "*Ioviniani errores . . . de Maria Deipara, eam scilicet post partum Virginem esse desiisse.*"¹

The heresy of denying the ἀειπαρθένεια was thus formally censured, and its upholders ceased to be in the communion of the Catholic Church.

We may briefly touch upon the witness of the Fathers to this truth. To save space, we may take S. Athanasius, S. Basil, and S. Epiphanius as representing the East, and S. Ambrose, S. Augustine, S. Jerome, and S. Leo as representing the West. We have already quoted S. Athanasius as using the title ἀειπαρθένος, which was also used by S. Epiphanius, while S. Basil uses its equivalent in speaking of the Blessed Virgin "*abiding in the consecration of her virginity.*"² S. Ambrose expresses his horror of the heresy which affirms "*that another birth came forth from that same virginal womb, from which Christ was born according to the flesh.*"³ S. Augustine uses an apt parallel between the "new tomb" in which our Lord was laid, and the Virgin's womb wherein nothing mortal was conceived, either before or after His birth.⁴ The idea of *natural reverence* with which S. Augustine thus surrounds the truth of the Perpetual Virginity of

¹ S. Augustine alludes to the heresy of Jovinian, in his answer to Julian in the Pelagian controversy. He says that Julian calls the Catholics Manichæans "more illius Ioviniani, qui ante paucos annos, *hæreticus novus*, virginitatem Sanctæ Mariæ destruebat" (*Contra duas Epp. Pelag.* lib. i. c. 2).

² S. Athanasius (*Contr. Ar.* ii. 21); S. Epiphanius (*Hær.* lxxviii.); S. Basil, "*ἐν τῷ ἀγιάσμῳ τῆς παρθενίας μένουσα*" (*Homil.* xxv.).

³ S. Ambrose denies the impious assertion "quod ex eodem utero virginali ex quo secundum carnem Christus natus est, alius partus effusus sit" (*Ep.* lxxix.).

⁴ "Sepultura vero illa cum creditur, fit recordatio novi monumenti

the Blessed Virgin has passed permanently into Christian thought upon the subject. S. Jerome and S. Leo have been already quoted, and the special importance of S. Leo's *semper Virginem*, as forming the first authoritative declaration of the ἀειπαρθενία by an Œcumenical Council, has been previously mentioned. We have now seen that the ἀειπαρθενία was taught by the representative Doctors of the Catholic Church, as well as by its Œcumenical Councils, and further, that those who denied it were formally censured and punished as heretics.

We may now turn for a moment to the evidence of the Primitive Liturgies on this subject, for the *lex orandi* of the Church has always corresponded with her *lex credendi*. In the *Suscipe Sancta Trinitas* of the ancient Roman Mass the words "Blessed Mary Ever-Virgin" occur. In the *Communicantes*, and in the *Libera nos* the words "Ever-Virgin Mother of God" are found. They occur in the same places in the Sarum Missal. The Eastern Liturgies use a greater freedom than the Western in their invocations of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints. The very ancient Liturgy of S. James, in the Commemoration of the Saints, uses the words "the all-Holy, pure, most glorious, Our Lady, Mary, Mother of God and Ever-Virgin." This conjunction of the titles Θεοτόκος and ἀειπαρθένος occurs perpetually in the Eastern Liturgies. We find it in the Liturgy of S. Chrysostom (Goar, *Euchol.* p. 58). It is also in the Syrian rite (*Ib.* p. 186), and in the Alexandrian rite (Assemani, *Cod. Lit.* t. vii. p. 85). It would be easy to multiply these liturgical testimonies to the ἀειπαρθενία, but space forbids.

quod resurrecturo ad vitæ novitatem præberet testimonium, sicut nascituro uterus virginalis. Nam sicut in illo monumento nullus alius mortuus sepultus est, nec ante, nec postea, sic in illo utero nec ante, nec postea, quidquam mortale conceptum est" (S. Aug. *de Fide et Symb.* c. xi.).

A modern Helvidian has defended the heresy, in an article which appears in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, by saying that the *prima facie* interpretation of the language of Scripture concerning the Blessed Virgin's relations with S. Joseph, and concerning "the brethren of the Lord," would favour the denial of the ἀειπαρθενία. The obvious answer to this assertion is that the Gospel narrative was written for Catholic Christians who believed in the ἀειπαρθενία, and that the Gospels themselves come to us upon the authority of the Catholic Church, which has declared the truth of the ἀειπαρθενία by the voice of its Œcumenical Councils.¹ The further answer may be made that there is not a single phrase or verse in the Scriptural narrative that has not been authoritatively explained by Catholic consent in accordance with the teaching of the ἀειπαρθενία.

The heretical explanation of ἕως οὗ in S. Matt. i. 25,² and the heretical assertion that the brethren of the Lord were

¹ Chamier, a foreign Protestant Divine, has said: "We therefore willingly embrace that sentiment, *which appears to have already from the beginning prevailed amongst Christians*, that she was a Virgin, not only in the whole mystery of Christ's generation, which certainly it is necessary that we should believe, *but also in the whole time of her after life*. And we disapprove of those who teach contrariwise, whether Helvidius, or Jovinian, or the Antidicomarianitæ" (*Chamieri Panstratia*, t. i. p. 303).

² "The particle 'till,' either in the Old Testament or the New, by no means implies that what did not take place *till* a particular period in question, took place *afterwards*. When God says to Jacob, '*I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of*,' it does not imply that there was, *after that*, any danger of Jacob's being forsaken by God. Again, when God says to the Ascended Christ, '*Sit Thou on My right hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool*,' it does not imply that, after the enemies were subdued, Christ should cease to sit at the right hand of God" (Sadler *in loc.*).

..shop Pearson (*Creed*, Art. iii.) has an exhaustive argument to the same purpose, in which he quotes the patristic explanation of ἕως as Sadler has expressed it. Hooker says: "Helvidius hath greatly

the sons of S. Joseph and the Blessed Virgin, is so abhor-

The heretical explanation. rent to every reverent believer in the Incarnation that it is painful even to confute it. Persons

who believe that the Evangelists intended to deny the *ἀειπαρθενία* are beyond the reach of argument, and necessarily prefer their own opinion to the authoritative voice of Catholic consent. The tendency of the age is to minimise the power of authority in matters of religion. This tendency

The witness of the Church of England to the ἀειπαρθενία. is only too prominent in the minds of some modern Anglicans, and it is therefore necessary to show that the Church of England has always

held the *ἀειπαρθενία*, and that her most eminent divines have continuously taught it as a Catholic verity.

To begin with, the Anglican Reformers held firmly to the authority of the Œcumenical Councils, and to the teaching of the Fathers, as expressing Catholic consent.¹ At the

Cranmer. beginning of the Reformation we find Archbishop Cranmer strenuously defending the *ἀειπαρθενία*, and stating that it must be believed of necessity (*Works*, ii. p. 60).

Bishop Latimer roundly denounced the deniers of the abused these words of Matthew" (V. 45, ii.) Bengel, with his shrewd insight, says: "Εως οὗ, non sequitur ergo *post*."

¹ We have already quoted the Canon of 1571 upon Catholic consent, and we may add to it some remarkable words of the *Reformatio Legum* on the authority of Œcumenical Councils. "Quædam illorum qualia sunt præcipue illa quatuor, Nicænum, Constantinopolitanum primum, Ephesinum, et Chalcedonense, magna cum reverentia amplectimur et suscipimus. Quid quidem iudicium de multis aliis quæ postea celebrata sunt ferimus, in quibus videmus et confitemur sanctissimos Patres de beata et summa Trinitate, de Iesu Christo, Domino et Servatore nostro, et humano redemptione per Eum procurata, iuxta Scripturas divinas multa gravissime et perquam sancte constituisse." The *Reformatio Legum* fortunately never became a binding Anglican document, for it embodied some serious errors. But its witness may be fairly cited here as a testimony to the mind of the Anglican Reformers upon the binding authority of Œcumenical Councils.

ἁειπαρθενία as *heretics*. He says: "There was a heretic who steadfastly said that Mary had more sons after she brought forth Christ; and here he took his arguments, saying we read in Scripture that Christ had brethren . . . which indeed is a foolish argument against all learning. The Jews in their tongue call all those who are kinsmen, *brethren*; therefore these heretics go far wide to prove that Mary had more sons beside Christ because we read that He had brethren . . . But she had no more, neither before nor after, but was a clear Virgin before she brought forth, and after she brought forth Him she remained a Virgin. And therefore these *heretics* do wrongfully violate, toss, and turmoil the Scriptures of God, according to their own fantasies and foolish minds" (*Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 326).

Modern Protestants profess a great regard for Bishop Latimer's opinions. It is useful to record that he denounced the deniers of the ἁειπαρθενία as heretics, although it may be unpleasant reading for the highly respectable Protestant Divines who have revived the Helvidian heresy in recent Bible dictionaries. We have quoted Hooker's condemnation of Helvidius in a previous note.

We may take Archbishop Bramhall as a typical Cambridge Divine of the seventeenth century. He says: "We admit genuine, universal, Apostolical traditions, as the Apostles' Creed, *the Perpetual Virginity of the Mother of God*, the Anniversary Festivals of the Church," etc. (*Works*, vol. i. p. 53). Archbishop Bramhall's witness to the fact that the ἁειπαρθενία was an "Apostolic tradition" shows that the Helvidian heresy had no foothold in the Church of England, which, as he says, accepted "Apostolical traditions."

Bishop Pearson, who was an Assessor of the Savoy Conference of 1661, may be taken as a type of the Caroline Divines who closed the Reformation period. His

words are clear, and beautiful in their reverence : "Thirdly, we believe that the Mother of our Lord to have been, not only before and after His Nativity, but also forever, *the most Immaculate and Blessed Virgin*. . . . The peculiar eminency and unparalleled privilege of that Mother, the special honour and reverence due unto that Son, and ever paid by her, the regard of that Holy Ghost Who came upon her, and the power of the Highest that overshadowed her, the singular goodness and piety of Joseph, to whom she was espoused, have persuaded the Church of all ages to believe that she still continued in the same virginity, and therefore is to be acknowledged *the Ever-Virgin Mary*. As if the Gate of the Sanctuary in the Prophet Ezekiel were to be understood of her : '*This Gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it ; because the Lord, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it, therefore it shall be shut*' (*On the Creed*, vol. i. p. 272). Bishop Pearson follows the patristic interpretation of Ezek. xlv. 2, and we may fairly consider his teaching representative of the Anglican Communion as a whole, because for the past two hundred years the Bishops have used his great work on the Creed as a text-book for Candidates for Holy Orders.

Bishop Bull says that the Blessed Virgin "remained ever a Virgin," and adds that "it cannot with decency be imagined that the most holy vessel which was thus once consecrated to be a receptacle of the Deity should be afterwards desecrated and profaned by human use" (Bull, *Sermon iv.* p. 96).

Dr. Frank uses the swaddling clothes as a type of hidden mysteries. "Will you see the clothes," he says, "that hid the treasure, not from men only, but from devils? The espousals of just Joseph and Holy Mary hid Christ's conception of a virgin ; the crying of an infant in a cradle, the bringing forth without

sorrow; the Purification, her entire virginity" (*Sermons*, vol. i. p. 86). The Anglican Communion, as a whole, is bound to the ἀειπαρθενία as declared by Œcumenical Councils, and taught by the leading Anglican Divines.

We may close this chapter with the conclusions of S. Thomas: (a) The error of Helvidius is *detestable*, since our Lord, as the Only Begotten of His Father, should also be the Only Begotten of the Blessed Virgin. (b) It dishonours the Holy Spirit of God. (c) It dishonours the Blessed Virgin herself. (d) It implies that S. Joseph was guilty of gross presumption after he had received the message of the Angel. "Therefore we must plainly assert that the Mother of God conceived as a virgin, brought forth as a virgin, and remained after the birth a virgin forever."¹

¹ "Respondeo, dicendum quod absque omni dubio detestandus est error Helvidii, qui dicere præsumpsit Matrem Christi post partum a Ioseph esse carnaliter cognitam, et alios filios genuisse. Hoc enim primo derogat Christi perfectioni: Qui sicut secundum divinam naturam unigenitus est Patris, tanquam perfectus per omnia Filius Eius; ita decuit ut esset unigenitus Matris, tanquam perfectissimum germen eius. Secundo, hic error iniuriam facit Spiritui Sancto, cuius sacrarium fuit uterus virginalis, in quo carnem Christi formavit. Unde non decebat quod de cætero violaretur per commixtionem virilem. Tertio, derogat dignitati et sanctitati Matris Dei, quæ ingratissima videretur, si tanto Filio contenta non esset, et si virginitatem, quæ in ea miraculose conservata fuerat, sponte perdere vellet per carnis concubitus. Quarto, etiam ipsi Ioseph esset ad maximam præsumptionem imputandum, si eam quam revelante angelo de Spiritu Sancto Deum concepisse cognoverat, polluere attentaret. Et ideo simpliciter est asserendum, quod Mater Dei sicut Virgo concepit, et virgo peperit, ita etiam et virgo post partum in sempiternum permansit" (*Summa* III. Q. xxviii. A. 3).

CHAPTER IV.

THE BLESSED VIRGIN AND THE SAINTS IN GLORY.

Deus Qui glorificatur in consilio Sanctorum : magnus et terribilis super omnes qui in circuitu Eius sunt.—Ps. lxxxviii. 8.

THE Church Militant is at one with the Church behind the veil, for we are taught that the unity of the Body of Christ is divided into three portions. First, there is the Church Triumphant, which consists of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints in Glory, with whom are included the souls of the martyrs “under the Altar” (Rev. vi. 9), and “the spirits of just men made perfect” (Heb. xii. 23). Secondly, there is the Church Expectant, which consists of the waiting souls who are being perfected by the love of our Redeemer in the Intermediate State, which is described in Holy Writ in the phrase “under the earth,” or “Abraham’s bosom.” Thirdly, there is “the Church Militant here in earth.” We have the statement of S. Paul that “at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth” (Phil. ii. 10);¹ and the parallel statement of S. John, that the song of the

¹ Bishop Wordsworth *in loc.* translates “beings” in preference to “things” of the world below. The primary meaning of the passage is undoubtedly the adoration and homage of the Catholic Church in its three portions, but the scope of the passage may be widened, in its secondary meaning, to include the whole creation (see Bishop Lightfoot *in loc.*).

Lamb is sung by "every creature which is in Heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth" (Rev. v. 13).¹ These passages clearly manifest the unity of the Catholic Church in its threefold division into the Church Triumphant, the Church Expectant, and the Church Militant, joined together as a whole in the adoration and worship of our Lord.

The relation of the Holy Angels to the three portions of the Church is necessarily that of ministry, communion, and fellowship. To enter fully into the question of the Ministry of Angels, and the relation of their ministry and communion with the members of Christ, is beyond the scope of this volume.

The relation of the Angels to the Church.
Bp. A. Forbes on Angels. We may be content with citing Bishop Forbes, who says of the relation of the Angels and Saints to the Blessed Virgin: "Since no Divine Mystery ends with this world, then, in that closest relation to Himself, higher than the Seraphim or whatever is highest in the Host of Heaven, is *she*, His *creature*, as *God*, but as *God-Man*, His *Mother* still. Well, then, may we think of Angels and Saints as one Body under Him, our Head, since He, their Head, is God-Man, and *nearest to Himself*, His *Human Mother*. . . . It may almost seem to be superfluous to adduce passages from the Fathers to show that they

¹ S. Ignatius says that our Lord "was truly crucified and died, βλεπόντων τῶν ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγέλων καὶ ὑποχθονίων" (*Trall.* ix.); with an evident allusion to one or both of these passages. He means that the Company of Heaven and the faithful on earth witnessed our Lord's death on the Cross, and that the spirits ἐν φυλακῇ witnessed to it as well when He proclaimed His victory over death in the realm of the dead. S. Irenæus quotes Phil. ii. 10 in his summary of the Faith of the Catholic Church as referring to the united homage of the three parts of the Church at the Final Judgment (*Adv. Hær.* i. 10).

Dean Alford has the following excellent note: "And every creature . . . which is in the Heaven (the chorus being *universal* this will include the Angels and the *glorified saints*), and on the earth, and under the earth (not the *devils*, but, as in Phil. ii. 10, the *departed spirits* in Hades," etc. (*Apoc.* v. 13).

taught that Angels and Saints pray for us. First, then, as to the Angels. Clement of Alexandria says: 'The Gnostic¹ prays with Angels as being already the equal of Angels, nor does he ever come to be out of the holy guardianship; even though he pray alone, he has the choir of the Holy One standing with him' (*Strom.* vii. p. 879). Origen unites the Angels and the departed Saints: 'But not the High Priest (our Lord) alone prays with those who pray sincerely, but also the *Angels*, who *joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance*, and the souls of the *Saints* who have fallen asleep before us' (*De Orat.* t. i. p. 213). He says: 'The Angel of each one, even of the little ones in the Church, both prays with us and acts with us in those things about which we pray, wherein it is possible' (*Ibid.* p. 215)" (Forbes *On the Articles*, pp. 388, 389).²

We shall deal at length with the relations between the Church Militant and the Church behind the veil in the next chapter, when we consider "the Communion of Saints." But before considering the condition of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints in the Church Triumphant it will be necessary

¹ By the "Gnostic" S. Clement means the true "gnostic," or Catholic believer, in contradistinction to the false Gnostics whose teaching he was opposing.

² We may add to the quotation from Bishop Forbes of Brechin a note from Bishop Forbes of Edinburgh, who died in 1634, and was one of the earlier leaders of the Caroline Divines. He quotes Vasquez as saying: "Offerre dicuntur Custodes Angeli orationes suorum"; and also the Lutheran Apology for the Confession of Augsburg, which admits the same truth: "Largimur quod Angeli *orent pro nobis*. Extat enim testimonium Zach. i., ubi Angelus orat," etc. He quotes to the same purpose the foreign Protestant Divines, M. Kemnitz, J. Gerhard, Zanchius, and Peter Martyr. He refers to S. Augustine (*De Trinitate*) and to his 121st Epistle; also to S. Bernard (*Serm.* vii. *in Cant.*). He notes the feebleness of the arguments of "the more rigid Protestants" against the Angels offering to God the prayers of the Saints (*Considerationes Modeste*, per Gul. Forbesium, S.T.D., vol. ii. pp. 143-149).

to say somewhat concerning the Church Expectant. This

The Church Expectant. at once brings us face to face with the question of Purgatory, which we cannot here discuss at

length. We may say first of all that Article XXII. rejects, under the name of “doctrina Romanensium,” an extreme mediæval view of the torments of Purgatory which we find set forth in Sir Thomas More’s well-known *Supplication of Souls*, put forth in answer to the *Supplication of Beggars*, which demanded the abolition of chantries. The Council

The Council on Trent on Purgatory. of Trent very carefully avoids lending any countenance to such unauthorised speculations.

It simply declares that “there is a Purgatory, and that the souls there detained are aided by the prayers of the faithful, and especially by the acceptable sacrifice of the Altar.” It orders “the Bishops to teach wholesome doctrine concerning Purgatory, which has been handed down by the Holy Fathers and sacred Councils.” It thus forbids the “doctrina Romanensium” of Purgatory, which, in its extreme mediæval form, could claim no authority from Councils or Fathers. It then proceeds: “But amongst the uneducated multitude, let the more difficult and subtle questions, and those which do not tend to edification, and seldom contribute aught towards piety, be kept back from public preachings. Neither let (the Bishops) suffer mention and public handling of uncertain points, or such as look like falsehood. But let them prohibit those things which tend to a certain kind of curiosity or superstition, or which savour of filthy lucre, as scandals and stumbling-blocks to the faithful”¹

Its Decree in harmony with Article XXII.

This Decree of the Council of Trent was published *after* the Anglican Article XXII., and is in practical harmony with it in protesting against mediæval

¹ “Cum Catholica Ecclesia . . . docuerit Purgatorium esse, animasque ibi detentas, fidelium suffrageis, potissimum vero acceptabili Altaris sacrificio iuari; præcipit Sancta Synodus Episcopis ut sanam de

abuses. We may note once more that the original Edwardine draft of Article XXII. contained a condemnation of the "doctrine of the Schoolmen" on Purgatory and Prayers for the Dead. The condemnation of Prayers for the Dead was struck out by the Elizabethan Reformers in the final review of the Articles in 1563, and the condemnation of the doctrine of the "Romanenses" on Purgatory substituted for the condemnation of the "doctrina Scholasticorum." This is a very important point, as proving that the Church of England has not departed from the Catholic doctrine of the Fathers and Schoolmen upon the Church Expectant.

The crude mediæval conception of torments exclusively physical forms no part of the scientific modern theology, of the Roman Church,¹ which finds its most beautiful expression in Cardinal Newman's *Dream of Gerontius*. He says of

Newman's
Dream of
Gerontius.

Purgatorio doctrinam, a sanctis Patribus, et sacris Conciliis traditam, a Christi fidelibus credi, teneri, doceri et ubique prædicari, diligenter studeant. Apud rudem vero plebem difficiliores ac subtiliores quæstiones, quæque ad ædificationem non faciunt, et ex quibus plerumque nulla fit pietatis accessio, a popularibus concionibus secluduntur. Incerta item, vel quæ specie falsi laborant, evulgari, ac tractari non permittant. Ea vero, quæ ad curiositatem quemdam aut superstitionem spectant, vel turpe lucrum sapiunt, tanquam scandala, et fidelium offendicula prohibeant" (*Conc. Trid., Sess. xxv. Decretum de Purgatorio*).

¹ Perrone is very clear on this point: "Omnia igitur, quæ spectant ad locum, durationem, pœnarum qualitatem, ad Catholicam fidem minime pertinent, seu definita ab Ecclesia non sunt" (*Prælect. Theol.* vol. v. p. 226).

On p. 231 Perrone mentions Mountagu, Gunning, Sheldon, and Barrow of the Caroline Divines, and Bingham of a little later period, as agreeing "in admittendo statu expiationis post mortem." We may add to Perrone's Anglican authorities Bishop W. Forbes of Edinburgh (A.D. 1630), Bishop Forbes of Brechin, Dr. Pusey, and, from his own independent and original way of thinking, that great Cambridge scholar, Dr. Hort. Of Article XXII. he says: "Nothing, I think, can be clearer than that

the soul in the Presence of Christ in the Church Expectant :

It is the Face of the Incarnate God
Shall smite thee with that keen and subtile pain :
And yet the memory which it leaves will be
A sovereign febrifuge to heal the wound ;
And yet withal it will the wound provoke,
And aggravate and widen it the more.

* * *
When then (if such thy lot) thou seest thy Judge,
The sight of Him will kindle in thy heart,
All tender, gracious, reverential thoughts.

* * *
There is a piercing in His pensive eyes,
Will pierce thee to the quick, and trouble thee.
And thou wilt hate and loathe thyself; for though
Now sinless, thou wilt feel that thou hast sinned,
As never didst thou feel; and wilt desire
To slink away and hide thee from His sight
And yet wilt have a longing eye to dwell
Within the beauty of His countenance.
And these two pains, so counter and so keen,
The longing for Him, when thou seest Him not ;
The shame of self at thought of seeing Him,
Will be thy veriest sharpest purgatory.

The Dream of Gerontius, pp. 43, 44.

S. Catharine of Genoa (A.D. 1560) says : " I do not believe it would be possible to find any joy comparable to that of a soul in Purgatory, excepting the joy of the Blessed in Paradise—a joy which goes on increasing day by day as God more and more flows in upon the soul, the Article does *not* condemn *all* doctrine that may be called a doctrine of Purgatory. . . . The idea of *purgation*, of cleansing as by fire, seems to me inseparable from what the Bible teaches of the Divine chastisements ; and, though little is said directly respecting the future state, it seems to me incredible that the Divine chastisements should in this respect change their character when this visible life is ended. Neither now nor hereafter is there reason to suppose that they act mechanically as by an irresistible natural process, irrespectively of human will and acceptance " (*Life and Letters of F. H. J. Hort*, vol. ii. p. 336).

which He does abundantly in proportion as every hindrance to His entrance is consumed away. The souls in Purgatory, having their wills conformed to the Will of God, and hence partaking of His goodness, remain satisfied with their condition, which is one of entire freedom from the guilt of sin. Cleansed thus from all sin, and united in will to God, they see God clearly, according to the light he imparts to them; they are conscious, too, what a good it is to enjoy God, that for this very end souls were created" (*Treatise on Purgatory*, c. ii. p. 3, and c. v., edited by Cardinal Manning).

The Catholic doctrine of Purgatory, as taught by Anglican Divines of unquestioned loyalty to the English Church, finds its most adequate summary in the words of Bishop W. Forbes of Edinburgh, who, after disproving the "doctrina Romanensium," defends "the opinion which is general among the Greeks"¹

Bishop W.
Forbes of
Edinburgh.

¹ The Eastern doctrine, as expressed at the Council of Florence (A.D. 1439), was that "the middle sort of souls were in a place of torment, but whether that were fire, or darkness and tempest, or something else, they would not contend" (αἱ δὲ μέσαι [ψυχαί] ὑπάρχουσι μὲν ἐν βασανιστηρίῳ, καὶ εἴτε πῦρ ἐστὶν, εἴτε ζόφος καὶ θύελλα, εἴτε τι ἕτερον, οὐ διαφερόμεθα) (*Concil. Florent. Sess. xxv.*).

The *Bulla Unionis* of Eugenius IV. sums up the matter as follows: "Si vere pœnitentes in Dei charitate decesserint, antequam dignis pœnitentiæ fructibus de commissis satisfecerint et omissis, eorum animas pœnis purgatoriis post mortem purgari." The Eastern Church, as a whole, repudiated the formal union ratified at Florence, but this statement practically represents her present teaching, as expressed by the Council of Bethlehem, and in the "Longer Catechism of the Russian Church." "Such as have begun their repentance in this life, but have not brought forth works meet for repentance . . . are carried to Hades, and there sustain the just punishment due to their sins, but know that they shall by the goodness of God be delivered from them . . . and to this nothing contributes so much as the unbloody Sacrifice which each person severally offers for his departed relatives, and which the Catholic and Apostolic Church daily offers for all" (Council of Bethlehem, Decree xviii.).

. . . of an *expiatory* Purgatory (which alone deserves the name of a Purgatory, properly speaking) in which, without the pains of Gehenna, the souls of the holy, whose condition is, as it were, intermediate, . . . enjoying the vision and fellowship of the Manhood of Christ, and of the Holy Angels, more and more until the day of the clear vision of God, *perfect* themselves in the Love of God by fervent and longing sighs" (*Considerationes Modestæ*, vol. ii. p. 138).

The condition of the souls of the faithful departed in the Church Expectant may be fitly expressed by Archbishop Laud's words of loving faith on the scaffold: "*Cupio dissolvi et esse cum Christo.*" The presence of our Blessed Lord is vouchsafed to the holy souls who are being perfected in "Abraham's bosom," and by virtue of its sanctifying power they pass on from stage to stage, from strength to strength, as they journey onwards to join the blessed company of "the spirits of just men made perfect" in the Church Triumphant.¹

¹ We may cite here the opinions of two Protestant writers, Leibnitz and Martensen. Leibnitz says: "Nearly all (teachers ancient and modern) have agreed that there is a fatherly chastening or purification after this life, whatever it might consist in. The souls themselves, on their departure from the body, receive enlightenment; and seeing for themselves now, for the first time, the shortcomings of the life that they have ended, and deeply pained by the sense of the horribleness of sin, they welcome the chastening with satisfaction, and would not, if they could, pass to their blissful consummation without it" (*Système Théol.* p. 350). Martensen says: "The kingdom of the dead is a kingdom of remembrance. The soul now enters into its own inmost recesses, resorts to that which is the very foundation of life, the true substratum and source of all existence. Hence arises the *purgatorial nature* of this state. As long as man is in this present world, he is in a kingdom of externals, wherein he can escape from self-contemplation and self-knowledge by the distractions of time, the noise and tumult of the world; but at death he enters into a kingdom which is the opposite of all this. . . . His soul finds itself in a kingdom of pure realities. The manifold voices of this worldly life . . . grow dumb, and the Holy Voice

The Eastern Church on the prayers of the Church Expectant for us. S. Thomas. Bellarmine. in the Church Expectant pray for us even as we pray for them. Although S. Thomas is adverse to this view, Bellarmine allows it, and here he is followed by modern Roman theologians.¹ It is a logical consequence of the Communion of Saints, which cannot be exclusively restricted to the Saints in glory. The witness of the Liturgies of the Catholic Church from primitive times testifies to the universality of the practice of prayers for the faithful departed, and for the offering of the Holy Sacrifice of the Altar on their behalf.² Before proceeding to treat of the condition of the Church Triumphant, it will be necessary to examine a theory held by some Anglicans upon the Intermediate State. This view consigns the Blessed Virgin and the Saints to an intermediate state of blessedness which is called "Paradise," and denies that there is any distinction between the Church Expectant and

now sounds alone . . . and hence the realm of the dead becomes a realm of judgments. So far is the human soul in this state from drinking forgetfulness that it may evermore be said, 'their works do follow them,' a recollection that presents to view the real and deepest truth of consciousness, which may not only be comforting and blissgiving, but judging and condemning truth also" (*Christian Dogmatics*, p. 457).

¹ The reference to S. Thomas is *Summa* II. 2^{dæ}, Q. lxxxiii. A. 4. Schouppe says, "Probabilis quoque est sententia Bellarmini (*De Purgat.* i. c. 13), licitum esse animas purgatorii invocare sicut preces piorum hominum in terris viventium licet poscere quod tamen Ecclesia publice facere non consuevit" (*Elementa Theol. Dogmat.* vol. ii. p. 608).

² The ancient Liturgy of S. James has Μνήσθητι, Κύριε ὁ Θεός, τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης σαρκός, . . . ὀρθόδοξων, ἀπὸ "Ἀβελ τοῦ δικαίου μέχρι τῆς σήμερον ἡμέρας. The Clementine Liturgy has Ὑπὲρ τῶν ἐν πίστει ἀναπαυσαμένων δεηθῶμεν. So also the Liturgy of S. Mark, the Gallican Liturgy, the Mozarabic, the Ambrosian, and the Roman Liturgies. The Gelasian Sacramentary has "Quæsumus, Domine, miserationum tuarum largitate concedas ut quicquid terrena conversatione contraxit, his sacrificiis mundetur."

the Church Triumphant.¹ It is based upon a wrong opinion of what the Church means by stating that the Blessed Virgin and the Saints who are perfected are *now* reigning with Christ in fruition of the Vision of God. The argument is set forth that the force of the General Judgment is invalidated if it be conceded that the Saints are *now* in glory. But the Church has never held that the Saints in glory now enjoy the Beatific Vision in such a manner that no increase of light and glory is possible to them after the Judgment Day. On the

S. Thomas teaches an increase of glory after the Resurrection—

contrary S. Thomas teaches that the resurrection of the body will give to the Saints in glory that “perfect consummation and bliss

both of body and soul” for which we pray in the Anglican Burial Office.² He confirms his argument by

Which is the Catholic doctrine of the Anglican Burial Office.

quoting Rev. vi. 9, as showing that the souls of the martyrs “under the Altar” were capable of an increase of glory, although he knew that

the verdict of the whole Church has always placed the

¹ The most scholarly exponent of this view is Dr. Luckock, Dean of Lichfield. And yet, in his volume on the Intermediate State, he is constrained to admit with regard to the Saints that “it may be some few have actually entered the Heavenly City,” a view which in his previous work, *After Death*, he attempted to disprove. His admission of the “Church Triumphant” in his latest work on the condition of souls after death, and its departure from his previous teaching, shows how great the weight of patristic evidence must be against his earlier view. Bishop Pearson, on the contrary, speaks of that “necessary distinction of the Saints on earth and the Saints in Heaven, the first belonging to the Militant, the second to the Triumphant, Church” (*Creed*, vol. i. p. 533).

² “*Vidi subtus altare animas intersectorum*, etc., dicit Glossa ordin. : *Modo animæ intersectorum sunt existentes subtus altare, id est, in minori dignitate quam sint futurae*. Ergo maior erit eorum beatitudo post resurrectionem quam post mortem. Respondeo dicendum quod beatitudinem sanctorum post resurrectionem augeri quidem extensive manifestum est, quia beatitudo tunc erit non solum in anima, sed etiam in corpore, et etiam ipsius animæ beatitudo augebitur extensive, in quantum

Martyrs in the Church Triumphant as reigning with Christ.

S. Augustine
on the
Martyrs.

S. Augustine says that the Church considered it unfitting to pray for the repose of a Martyr,¹ since the intercessions of the Martyrs were

invoked for those still militant here on earth. The consent of the Church upon this point, and its practical outcome in the practice of invoking the intercessions of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints in glory, draws a distinct line between the Church Expectant and the Church triumphant.² But this distinct line does not minimise the force of our Lord's teaching upon the Universal Judgment, any more than the *Particular* Judgment does, which is passed upon each soul immediately after death. The General Judgment, in Scripture, vindicates the righteousness of God

The General
and the Partic-
ular Judg-
ment.

before the whole created Universe. This Judgment will be a manifestation of the righteousness of God's Elect in its consequences,

as manifest in the work of redemption. The full consequences of God's purpose in the Incarnation will be made

anima non solum gaudebit de bono proprio, sed etiam de bono corporis" (*Summa* III. Suppl. Q. xciii. A. 1.).

¹ "Ideoque habet ecclesiastica disciplina quod fideles noverunt, cum martyres eo loco recitantur ad altare Dei, ubi non pro ipsis oretur, pro cæteris autem commemoratis defunctis oratur; iniuria est in Ecclesia pro martyre orare, cuius nos debemus orationibus" (S. Aug. *de Verb. Apost.* c. i.).

² Pope John XXII. appeared to deny the Beatific Vision to the Saints of the Church Triumphant in a sermon preached on All Saints' Day, 1331. A bitter controversy arose, and the Pope ultimately stated his belief as follows: "We confess and believe that the souls separated from the body and purified are in Heaven, in Paradise with Jesus Christ, and in company with the angels; and that they see God and the Divine Essence clearly face to face, *so far as the disembodied state allows*. And if we have preached, said, or written aught to the contrary, we expressly revoke it" (*Fleury*, I. xciv. p. 21).

The words "so far as the disembodied state allows" are in harmony with the teaching of S. Thomas upon the increase of glory after the Resurrection of the Body.

plain, and also the full effect of the Blessed Virgin's "Ecce ancilla Domini." The effect of S. Stephen's prayer will be manifest in S. Paul's work in the world in a manner which we cannot realise now. We shall know, as we are known.

The Saints now in glory will sit in judgment with our Lord¹ with their righteousness made as clear as the day, and their glorified bodies ministering to their increase in glory. No valid argument against the present glories of the Church Triumphant can be fairly drawn from revealed truth upon the subject of the Day of Judgment. The upholders of the defective theory of the Intermediate State, which denies that the Saints reign with Christ, say that souls without bodies cannot enter Heaven. But S. John's vision of the souls of the martyrs "under the Altar" of Heaven is a sufficient answer to their theory in this respect.

Our Lord's words to the penitent robber. They also consider that our Lord's words to the penitent robber constitute a conclusive proof that "Paradise" is a synonym for the "place of departed souls" where our Lord preached to the "spirits ἐν φυλακῇ" in the interval between His death and His Resurrection. It is evident that our Lord's victory on the Cross wrought a mighty change in the condition of the Old Testament saints who had died in faith of a Redeemer to come. The distinctive point of our Lord's words to the

¹ "Know ye not that the Saints shall judge the world?" (1 Cor. vi. 2.). The Protestant commentator Godet remarks that "the idea of a real judicial act is demanded by the context." "It must refer (says Sadler *in loc.*) to the Saints being called by Christ to be in some sort His assessors at the last Day." The "judging of angels" in verse 3 evidently refers to the Saints as assessors, when the final doom is pronounced on the Fallen Archangel and his host of evil angels, and the words of our Lord on the judicial thrones of the Apostles (S. Matt xix. 28) form a parallel to S. Paul's words on the office of the Church Triumphant at the Final Judgment. Dionysius of Alexandria calls the Martyrs μέτοχοι τῆς κρίσεως αὐτοῦ [Χριστοῦ] καὶ συνδικάζοντες αὐτῷ (Ap. Euseb. *H. E.* vi. 42).

penitent robber is that he was to be not only in Paradise, but "*with Me*" in Paradise. We cannot measure the effect of the change wrought by our Lord's words to "*with Me.*"

our Lord's perfected Atonement upon the souls of the faithful who had died before the Victory of the Cross, and we certainly cannot find an argument from our Lord's use of the word "Paradise" to describe the condition of holy souls during the interval between His death and the complete triumph of His Resurrection and Ascension.¹ The mystery of that interval is too profound

for us to build a theory upon it which permanently identifies "Paradise" with the Intermediate State, and which also ventures to deny the possibility of the Saints reigning *with Christ* in Heaven before the Final Judgment. Besides which, S. Paul speaks of his being "*caught up into Paradise*" as the equivalent of being "*caught up to the Third Heaven*" (2 Cor. xii. 2, 4),² and his words imply that his rapture was

¹ Thorndike declines to identify the "Paradise" spoken of by our Lord to the penitent robber, with the "Paradise" into which S. Paul was caught up. He says: "It seems no more than reason to grant that S. Paul was ravished to the presence of our Lord Christ. But I must needs insist that the word 'Paradise' could not signify the same thing to S. Paul *after* the Ascension of our Lord, as to the hearers of our Lord *before* it" (*Works*, vol. iv. pt. 2, p. 639). Thorndike thus recognises that the penitent robber was with our Lord in the place of holy souls departed during the interval between His death and Resurrection, and that the complete triumph of our Lord's Ascension made "Paradise" and the "Third Heaven" synonymous terms.

² S. Irenæus identifies Paradise with the Third Heaven as the place to which Enoch and Elijah were translated: "Ἐν ᾧ καὶ Παῦλος ἀπόστολος εἰσκομισθεὶς ἤκουσεν ἄρρητα ῥήματα," κ.τ.λ. (*Hær.* v. cap. 5). On which Bishop Andrews says: "Irenæus ex ipso illo loco affirmat *Paradisum tertium illud cælum esse in quo, asportatus eo Paulus audivit sermones inenarrabiles*" (*Resp. ad Bellarm.* p. 348). Dean Alford follows S. Irenæus here, and so does Sadler, who says that Paradise in Rev. ii. 7, compared with Rev. xxii. 2, "evidently designates the highest state of blessedness, for in the first of these

not to the intermediate state of the Church Expectant, but rather to the glory of the Church Triumphant.

There was a valid excuse for the adoption of this defective theory by the early Tractarians. They had to contend with such an evil heritage of Puritan traditions and Protestant prejudices against *any* doctrine of the Intermediate State, however expressed, that they gladly availed themselves of a theory that did not involve the use of the word "Purgatory," or the idea of the Saints as necessarily reigning with Christ.

Excuse for the Tractarian adoption of this defective theory of the Intermediate State. They cannot be overmuch blamed for moving along the line of least resistance, especially as they believed that they could claim some patristic authority for their theory. Tertullian says: "How shall the soul arise

Its alleged patristic authorities.

like a vapour to Heaven while Christ is still sitting there at the Right Hand of the Father, when as yet the command of God has not been heard by the Trumpet of the Archangel? . . . Heaven is opened to none whilst the earth remains with its bars fastened."¹ This passage would contradict a denial of the existence of the Church Expectant. It might also apply to a denial of that "perfect consummation" of *body and soul* after the General Resurrection, which S. Thomas teaches as a complementary truth to his teaching on the Church

Tertullian on souls in Heaven.

places Christ promises to him who finally overcomes, that he shall *eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God*; and in the latter passage, this Tree of Life is said to be on either side of the river which flows out of the Throne of God and of the Lamb. I have no doubt whatever that *one* and not *two* places are meant. I believe that S. Paul simply means to say that he was caught up to the *highest region in the unseen and spiritual world*" (Sadler, *Comm. on 2 Cor. in loc.*).

¹ "Quomodo ergo anima exhalabit in cœlum, Christo illic adhuc sedente ad dexteram Patris, nondum Dei iussu per tubam Archangeli audito? . . . Nulli patet cœlum terra adhuc salva, ne dixerim clausa" (Tert. *de Anima*, 55).

Triumphant, but it can hardly be said to deny that teaching.

Tertullian
places the
Martyrs in
Paradise.

Moreover, Tertullian himself says that "no one departing from the body at once appears before the Lord, unless by the prerogative of martyrdom—that is to say, he is transferred to Paradise, and not to the place of souls departed."¹ This passage affirms that the Martyrs appear "before the Lord," and thus enjoy the Beatific Vision in such measure as is possible for disembodied souls "under the Altar." Tertullian here draws a distinct contrast between "Paradise" and the "place of souls departed." The "place of souls departed" cannot be identified with "Paradise" in the teaching of Tertullian, unless his words are divorced from their plain meaning. What he means may be inferred from his identification of "infernus" (the place of souls departed) with the Intermediate State of the souls waiting for Heaven or Hell. The region of refreshment, he says, "I call Abraham's bosom . . . al-

Tertullian on
the Church
Expectant.

though it is not celestial . . . it is wont to provide an intermediate refreshment for the souls of the righteous, until the consummation of all things shall complete the general Resurrection in the fulness of reward."² Tertullian here evidently refers to the Church Expectant, and does not mean to state that the souls of the Martyrs are in "Abraham's bosom," which he does not identify with Paradise.

The advocates of the theory that the Church Expectant is in "Paradise" cannot gain much help from S. Justin Martyr. They, however, rely on passages from Justin Martyr, S. Irenæus, Origen, and Lactantius.

¹ "Nemo enim perigrinatus a corpore statim immoratur penes Dominum, iuri ex martyrii prærogativa, Paradiso scilicet, non inferis diversurus" (Tert. *de Res. Carn.* 43).

² "Eam itaque regionem sinum dico Abrahæ, etsi non cœlestem . . . interim refrigerium præbituram animabus iustorum, donec consummatio rerum resurrectionem omnium plenitudine mercedis expungat" (Tert. *adv. Marc.* iv. 34).

Justin Martyr says: "If you have fallen in with any persons called Christians who do not admit this (*i.e.* the Resurrection), but dare to blaspheme the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob," and say that there is no resurrection of the dead, but that their souls at the time of their death are taken up into Heaven, do not regard them as Christians."¹ This is a somewhat unfortunate passage upon which to build a theory. It occurs in the vindication of Chiliasm by Justin, and is directed against those who deny the resurrection of the body. One, at least, of the opponents of the truth that the Saints reign with Christ in the Church Triumphant goes so far as to say that this truth is "the view combated by Justin as *not a Christian view*."² "The view combated by Justin" was the view of those heretics who denied the resurrection of the dead, and consequently denied the reunion of soul and body at the Judgment Day. The fact that Justin expressed his denial of this heresy by saying that souls are

not "taken up to Heaven at the moment of death" proves nothing further than that his words (i) assert the resurrection of the body, and (ii) affirm the presence of waiting souls in the Church Expectant. In another passage he says that "the souls of the pious abide in some better region, and those of the unrighteous and wicked in a worse, awaiting alike the Day of Judgment."³ Here again he expresses the Catholic doctrine of the Church Expectant, without saying anything

¹ "Εἰ γὰρ καὶ συνεβάλετε ὑμεῖς τισὶ λεγομένοις Χριστιανοῖς, καὶ τοῦτο μὴ ὁμολογοῦσιν, ἀλλὰ καὶ βλασφημεῖν τολμῶσι τὸν Θεὸν Ἀβραάμ, καὶ τὸν Θεὸν Ἰσαάκ, καὶ τὸν Θεὸν Ἰακώβ, οἳ καὶ λέγουσι μὴ εἶναι νεκρῶν ἀνάστασιν, ἀλλὰ ἅμα τῷ ἀποθνήσκειν τὰς ψυχὰς αὐτῶν ἀναλαμβάνεσθαι εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν, μὴ ὑπολάβητε αὐτοὺς Χριστιανούς" (Justin M. *Dial.* 80).

² Canon Mason's *Purgatory*, etc., p. 96.

³ "Τὰς μὲν τῶν εὐσεβῶν ἐν κρείττονί ποι χώρῳ μένειν, τὰς δὲ ἀδίκους καὶ πονηρὰς ἐν χείρονι, τὸν τῆς κρίσεως ἐκδεχομένας χρόνον τότε" (Justin M. *Dial.* 5).

about the Church Triumphant. It is impossible to argue from this omission that he was ignorant upon the subject, and it is unsafe to infer that his word *εὐσεβῶν* is intended to include the Blessed Virgin, the Apostles and the Martyrs, or Enoch and Elijah, the translated Saints of the Old Covenant; just as it would be equally unsafe to infer that the passages in the Fathers, which assert that the Saints reign with Christ in the Church Triumphant, imply that they did not believe (with S. Thomas) in that increase of glory which will accrue to the Saints when body and soul are reunited in the General Resurrection.

S. Irenæus certainly affirms that "the souls depart into a place unseen, appointed for them by God; and there they dwell until the Resurrection, waiting for the Resurrection; then receiving again their bodies, and rising complete, that is with their bodies, even as the Lord rose, thus shall they come unto the Vision of God."¹ Before we can allow those who deny that the Saints reign with Christ to press this passage in furtherance of their contention, the context and argument of S. Irenæus must be examined. He is opposing those who do not acknowledge the redemption of their bodies (*salutem carnis suæ*) and asserting the Resurrection of the Body against heretics. He says that if souls go straight to Heaven at the instant of death, our Lord's soul would thus have gone to Heaven from the Cross, leaving His body to the earth (*relinquens corpus terræ*), without the process of Resurrection and Ascension. He therefore lays down the doctrine of the Church Expectant much as Justin does, and no valid argument can be framed from his silence on the Church

¹ "Αἱ ψυχὰι ἀπέρχονται εἰς ἀόρατον τόπον τὸν ὠρισμένον αὐταῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ, κακεῖ μέχρι τῆς ἀναστάσεως φοιτῶσι, περιμένονσαι τὴν ἀνάστασιν. ἔπειτα ἀπολαβοῦσαι τὰ σώματα, καὶ ὁλοκλήρως ἀναστᾶσαι, τουτέστι σωματικῶς, καθὼς καὶ ὁ Κύριος ἀνέστη, οὕτως ἐλεύσονται εἰς τὴν ὄψιν τοῦ Θεοῦ" (S. Irenæus, *Hær.* v. 31).

Triumphant when he is engaged in confuting a heresy which denies the existence of the Church Expectant.

Origen is also cited as a witness against the existence of the Church Triumphant because he says :
Origen.

“Not even the Apostles have yet received their joy, but even they are waiting that I also may be a partaker of their joy. Nor do the saints on their departure from hence immediately attain the entire rewards of their merits, but they await us, although slow and laggards as we are.”¹ But Origen is a difficult witness. Canon Mason is constrained to say that “it is hard to form a connected and systematic idea of Origen’s belief with regard to the state of the faithful departed.”² And yet he quotes the above passage as a witness in favour of his own theory which denies the present existence of the Church Triumphant. As a matter of fact the witness of Origen may fairly be applied to support the view of S. Thomas, that the Saints of the Church Triumphant will receive an increase of glory at the General Judgment, when their bodies will be reunited with their souls.

The same argument may be applied to the witness of Lactantius, who says that “all are detained in one common custody until the time comes for the Supreme Judge to make His examination of their deservings.”³ It is manifestly beside the mark to include the Blessed Virgin and the Saints *in patria* in the word “all” as used by Lactantius; and even if

¹ “Nondum receperunt lætitiā suā ne apostoli quidem, sed et ipsi expectant, ut et ego lætitiæ eorum particeps fiam. Neque enim decedentes hinc sancti continuo integrā meritorum suorum præmia consequuntur, ut expectant etiam nos, licet morantes, licet desides” (Origen *in Levit.* Hom. vii. 2).

² Mason’s *Purgatory*, etc., p. 88.

³ “Nam omnes in una communique custodia detinentur, donec tempus adveniat, quo maximus iudex meritorum faciat examen” (Lactantius, *Inst. Div.* vii. 21).

he meant to include them by the word "all," it only shows that in the words of Bishop Bull, Lactantius "was a rhetorician, not a theologian, and never at any time had a place among the doctors of the Church."¹

We now turn to the positive testimony of the Fathers on the other side. The Apostolic Fathers speak with no uncertain voice of the Church Triumphant.

S. Clement of Rome. S. Clement of Rome says that S. Peter "having suffered martyrdom went to the place of *glory* due to him"; and that S. Paul "departed from the world and went to the Holy Place."²

S. Polycarp has a parallel phrase, where, speaking of S. Paul and the other Apostles, he says that "they are in the place due to them *with the Lord*."³ The special point in these passages is that the Apostles and Martyrs are represented as in the place of *glory, with the Lord*. This language is hardly applicable to the Church Expectant in "Abraham's bosom," which is described as a place of *refreshment*, but not of *glory*.

S. Ignatius. S. Ignatius speaks of his approaching martyrdom as "attaining to God," and of the inward water of life saying to him "Go to the Father."⁴ We have already seen that Tertullian regards the Martyrs as being in "the Presence of God," which is clearly the same idea as the "place of glory" of S. Clement, and the "attaining to God" of S. Ignatius. Dionysius of Alexandria

¹ Bishop Bull, *Def. Symb. Nicæn.* ii. 14, 4.

² "Ὁ Πέτρος . . . μαρτυρήσας ἐπορεύθη εἰς τὸν ὀφειλόμενον τόπον τῆς δόξης. Παῦλος . . . ἀπηλλάγη τοῦ κόσμου καὶ εἰς τὸν ἅγιον τόπον ἐπορεύθη" (S. Clem. Rom. *ad Cor.* i. 5).

³ "Εἰς τὸν ὀφειλόμενον αὐτοῖς τόπον εἰσὶ παρὰ τῷ Κυρίῳ" (S. Polycarp, *Phil.* 9). There is another parallel in the Epistle of S. Barnabas (19), "τὸν ὠρισμένον τόπον."

⁴ "Ἀγνίσκεται ὑμῶν τὸ ἐμὸν πνεῦμα, οὐ μόνον νῦν ἀλλὰ καὶ ὅταν Θεοῦ ἐπιτύχω" (S. Ign. *ad Trall.* 13). "Ἦδωρ δὲ ζῶν . . . ἔσωθέν μοι λέγον· Δεῦρο πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα" (*Ad Rom.* 7).

(A.D. 251) writes of the Martyrs as now "reigning with Christ and sharing His Kingdom."¹

When we examine the writings of the Fathers of a later period we find the same teaching expressed in equally clear language.

S. Jerome. S. Jerome (who, with S. Augustine, is quoted authoritatively in the Thirty-nine Articles) says :

"If the Apostles and Martyrs while still in the body could pray for others, when they still ought to be full of care for themselves, how much more can they do so after they have been crowned in victories and triumphs ! One man, Moses, obtains pardon from God for six hundred thousand armed men, and Stephen, the imitator of his Lord, and the first Martyr in Christ, begs forgiveness for his persecutors ; and shall their power be less after they have begun to be with Christ ?"²

S. Augustine speaks of the Church Triumphant as not needing our prayers, which are offered for the rest of the faithful in the Church Expectant. "The righteousness of the Martyrs is perfect,"

¹ "Αὐτοὶ τοίνυν οἱ θεῖοι μάρτυρες παρ' ἡμῖν, οἱ νῦν τοῦ Χριστοῦ πάρεδροι καὶ τῆς βασιλείας αὐτοῦ κοινωνοί," κ.τ.λ. (Apud Euseb. *H. E.* vi. 42).

The Epistle of the Churches of Lyons and Vienne, written after the persecution of A.D. 177, uses similar language, and speaks of the Martyrs as "νικηφόροι πρὸς Θεὸν ἀπελθόντες . . . μετ' εἰρήνης ἐχώρησαν πρὸς Θεόν (Apud Euseb. *H. E.* v. 2).

² At the close of the fourth century, Vigilantius, a priest from Gaul, attacked the Catholic doctrine of the Communion of Saints, and asserted (by misinterpreting Rev. vi. 9) "that even the martyrs, with all their entreaties, were unable to obtain revenge for their own blood, and that therefore the saints *in patria* did not intercede for us." S. Jerome vigorously replied : "Si Apostoli et Martyres adhuc in corpore constituti possint orare pro cæteris, quando pro se adhuc debent esse solliciti : quanto magis post coronas victorias et triumphos. Unus homo Moyses sexcentis millibus armatorum impetrat a Deo veniam : et Stephanus, imitator Domini sui et primus Martyr in Christo, pro persecutoribus veniam deprecatur, et postquam cum Christo esse cœperint, minus valebunt ?" (*Ep.* liii. *adv. Vigilantium*).

he says, "because they have been perfected in their very act of martyrdom. For this reason the prayers of the Church are not offered for them. For the rest of the faithful departed they are offered, but not for Martyrs; for they died so perfect that they are not our clients, but our advocates. Neither are they this in themselves, but in Him to Whom they cleaved as perfect members to the Head."¹

S. Ambrose takes the same view of the Martyrs, who, as members of the Church Triumphant, are to be invoked to pray for us as our intercessors. He says: "Martyrs are to be besought whose patronage we seem to claim for ourselves by having their bodies as a kind of pledge. They who washed away whatever sins they had in their own blood are able to entreat for our sins; for they are God's Martyrs, our leaders, the spectators of our life and actions. Let us not be ashamed to employ them as intercessors for our weakness, because they themselves have known the weaknesses of the body even when they overcame."²

S. Gregory is asked whether the souls of the just are received into Heaven before the Resurrection of the Body. He replies: "We cannot affirm or deny this of the souls of the righteous as a whole. For there are souls of the righteous kept out of the Heavenly Kingdom, for what reason except that they are not yet

¹ "Martyrum perfecta iustitia est, quoniam in ipsa passione perfecti sunt. Ideo pro illis in Ecclesia non oratur. Pro aliis fidelibus defunctis oratur, pro martyribus non oratur: tam enim perfecti exierint, ut non sint suscepti nostri sed advocati. Neque hoc in se, sed in Illo cui capiti perfecta membra cohæserunt" (S. Aug. *Sermo* cclxxxv. 5).

² "Martyres obsecrandi, quorum videmur nobis quodam corporis pignore patrociniū vindicare. Possunt pro peccatis rogare nostris, qui proprio sanguine, etiam si qua habuerunt peccata, laverunt; isti enim sunt Dei martyres, nostri præsules, speculatores vitæ, actuumque nostrorum. Non erubescamus eos intercessores nostræ infirmitatis adhibere; quia ipsi infirmitates corporis, etiam cum vincerent, cognoverunt" (S. Ambr. *de Viduis*, 55).

made perfect ! But nevertheless it is clearer than daylight (*luce clarius constat*) that the souls of just men made perfect after that they are delivered from their carnal prisons are immediately received into their heavenly places. Which the Very Truth Himself attests when He saith, ‘*Wheresoever the Body is, there will the eagles be gathered together,*’ because where our Redeemer Himself is in Body, there without any doubt will the souls of the just be gathered together. Moreover, Paul desired to be dissolved and to be with Christ. Whoever, then, does not doubt that Christ is in Heaven, neither let him deny that the soul of Paul is in Heaven” (*Dial.* lib. IV. cap. xxv.).¹

We may conclude the testimony of these great Doctors of Latin Christendom with this clear statement of S. Gregory regarding the Church Triumphant and the Church Expectant.

We may take S. Gregory Nazianzen as a type of the Greek Fathers. In his Funeral Oration on S. Basil he says: “He now abides *in Heaven*, and there, as I think, offers sacrifice on our behalf and prays for the people, for so he did not leave us as to have left us altogether.”²

S. Gregory of Nyssa thus invokes S. Ephraem: “Do thou, standing by the Divine Altar, and ministering in company with angels to the All-Holy Trinity, the source of life, remember all of us, asking for us

¹ S. Gregory does not put aside the question of the increase of glory which “the spirits of just men made perfect” will have at the General Resurrection. He is asked: “Si igitur nunc in cœlo sunt animæ iustorum, quid est quod in Die Iudicii pro iustitiæ suæ retributione recipient?” He replies: “Hoc eis nimirum crescit in iudicio, quod nunc animarum sola, postmodum vero etiam corporum beatitudine perfruuntur, ut in ipsa quoque carne gaudeant, in quo labores pro Domino, cruciatusque pertulerunt” (*Dial.* IV. cap. xxv. *in med.*).

² “Καὶ νῦν ὁ μὲν ἐστὶν ἐν οὐρανοῖς κάκει τὰς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ὡς οἶμαι προσφέρων θυσίας καὶ τοῦ λαοῦ προσευχόμενος· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἀπολιπὼν ἡμᾶς παντάπασιν ἀπολέλοιπεν” (S. Greg. Naz. *Orat.* xx. *in laud. Basilii.*).

remission of sins and enjoyment of the Eternal Kingdom.”¹ In this passage he expresses his belief that S. Ephraem is ministering with the angels in the Church Triumphant.

S. Cyril of Jerusalem writes: “We all of us supplicate Thee, and offer to Thee this sacrifice that we may also commemorate those who have fallen asleep before us; *firstly* Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, to the end that God, by their prayers and intercessions, may accept our petition; *afterwards* also for the holy Fathers and Bishops who have fallen asleep before us, and for all those generally who among us have fallen asleep before us, believing that there will be the greatest benefit to those souls on whose behalf supplication is offered to God in the presence of the Holy and most awful Sacrifice.”²

S. Cyril here divides the faithful departed into two classes; those for whom the Holy Sacrifice is offered in *commemoration*, namely, the Saints of the Church Triumphant, who intercede *for us*; and those for whom it is offered by way of supplication, namely, the souls of the Church

Expectant, for whom *we* intercede. S. Augustine on the Church Triumphant and the Church Expectant. expresses the same thought when he says that the Christian “sacrifices of the Altar, or of almsgiving, are offered for all the baptized who are deceased, as thanksgivings for the very good, propitiations for those who are not very bad, even though they are of no avail for the very bad.”³

¹ “Σὺ δὲ τῷ θεῷ παριστάμενος θυσιαστηρίῳ καὶ τῇ ζωαρχικῇ καὶ ὑπεραγίᾳ λειτουργῶν σὺν ἀγγέλοις Τριάδι, μέμνησο πάντων ἡμῶν αἰτούμενος ἡμῶν ἁμαρτημάτων ἄφεσιν αἰωνίου τε βασιλείας ἀπόλαυσιν (S. Greg. Nyssen. t. iii. p. 585).

The Saints of the Church Triumphant are represented, in Rev. vii. 13-15, as “clothed in white robes,” and coming “out of great tribulation.” Therefore are they before the Throne of God, and “serve Him day and night in His Temple.”

² S. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures on the Mysteries*, v. 9.

³ “Quum ergo sacrificia sive Altaris, sive quarumcunque eleemosy-

The Anglican Reformers of 1549 held the Catholic doctrine of the Church Triumphant and the Church Expectant in relation to the Holy Eucharist precisely as S. Cyril and S. Augustine have defined it. In the Canon of the Mass in the First Prayer Book of 1549, there was a commemoration and thanksgiving for the Church Triumphant, and a prayer of intercession for the Church Expectant. This doctrine has never been altered by the omission of the passage in question in the Book of 1552, for it is well known that the Reformers of 1552 did not venture to condemn the doctrine of the Book of 1549.¹

narum pro baptizatis defunctis omnibus offeruntur, pro valde bonis gratiarum actiones sunt, pro non valde malis propitiationes sunt, pro valde malis, etiamsi nulla sunt adiutamenta mortuorum," etc. (S. Aug. *Enchiridion*, c. cx.).

The Church carried forward into the New Covenant and its central Sacrifice the ancient Jewish practice of praying for the dead. Thorndike says: "And whatsoever we may make of the 2nd Book of Maccabees, the antiquity of it will always be evidence that the principal author of it, Jason of Cyrene, could never have been either so senseless or so impudent as to impose upon his nation that prayers or sacrifices were used by them in regard of the Resurrection, if they believed not the being and sense of human souls after death" (*Works*, vol. iv. pt. 2, p. 637). He quotes 2 Macc. xii. 43: "And when he had made a gathering throughout the company to the sum of two thousand drachms of silver, he sent it to Jerusalem to offer a sin-offering, doing therein very well and honestly in that he was mindful of the resurrection; for if he had not hoped that they that were slain should rise again, it had been superfluous and vain to pray for the dead."

¹ The Canon of the Mass in the Prayer Book of 1549 followed the ordinary Western Use. The Sarum Canon commemorated the Church Triumphant in the words "Communicantes et memoriam venerantes inprimis gloriosæ semper Virginis Mariæ, genetricis Dei et Domini nostri Iesu Christi, sed et beatorum Apostolorum et Martyrum tuorum Petri, Pauli . . . et omnium sanctorum tuorum," etc. After the Consecration came the prayer for the Church Expectant: "Memento etiam, Domine, animarum famulorum famularumque tuarum N. et N., qui nos præcesserunt cum signo fidei et dormiunt in somno pacis; ipsis,

We turn now to the consideration of the present glory of the Church Triumphant. The Blessed Virgin and the Saints of the Church Triumphant reign with Christ, and are without fault before the Throne of God. In the words of Bishop Wordsworth's beautiful hymn :

Now they reign in Heavenly glory, *now* they walk in golden light,
Now they drink, as from a river, holy bliss and infinite;
Love and peace they taste for ever, and all truth and knowledge see
In the Beatific Vision of the Blessed Trinity.

Bishop Wordsworth does not intend by his last two lines to deny the increase of glory that will accrue to the Saints after the General Resurrection, in accordance with the teaching of S. Bernard,¹ and S. Thomas Aquinas. But whilst we admit that the souls of the Church Triumphant only enjoy the Vision of God "so far as the disembodied state allows," we

Domine, et omnibus in Christo quiescentibus locum refrigerii, lucis et pacis ut indulgeas deprecamur."

The Canon of 1549 is as follows : "And here we do give unto Thee most high praise and hearty thanks for the wonderful grace and virtue, declared in all Thy Saints from the beginning of the world : And chiefly in the glorious and most blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Thy Son Jesu Christ our Lord and God, and in the holy Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, and Martyrs, whose examples, O Lord, and steadfastness in Thy faith, and keeping Thy Holy Commandments, grant us to follow." After this commemoration and thanksgiving for the Church Triumphant the Canon of 1549 prays for the Church Expectant as follows : "We commend unto Thy mercy all other Thy servants, which are departed hence from us with the sign of faith, and now do rest in the sleep of peace : Grant unto them, we beseech Thee, Thy mercy and everlasting peace, and that, at the Day of the General Resurrection, we and all they which be of the mystical body of Thy Son may altogether be set on His right hand, and hear that His most joyful voice : 'Come unto Me, O ye that be blessed of My Father,'" etc.

¹ S. Bernard considers the Saints "under the Altar" will be exalted "above the Altar" after the Final Judgment. "Interim ergo sub Christi Humanitate feliciter Sancti quiescunt, in quam nimirum desiderant etiam Angeli ipsi prospicere, donec veniat tempus, quando iam

are here met by a further question. It is revealed to us in Holy Writ that some of the Saints in the Church Triumphant are not in the disembodied state. What increase of glory is possible to them after the General Resurrection? May we not, with due reverence in approaching so deep a mystery, believe that the vindication of God's justice before the world, the final triumph of the Church Militant, and the passing of our Lord's Mediatorial Kingdom into the Eternal Kingdom in which God shall be "all in all" (1 Cor. xv. 28), will increase the glory of those Saints of the Church Triumphant who are even *now* before the Throne, with their bodies united to their souls? The first in point of time amongst

these Saints is Enoch, the seventh from Adam, who was found faithful in a faithless and evil generation. The words of Genesis v. 24, "Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him," are defined by Hebrews xi. 5: "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death ('translatus est, ne videret mortem,' Vulg.), and was not found, because God had translated him, for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God."¹ Then we have the Translation of Elijah (2 Kings ii.). There is also the mystery concerning the body of Moses, who appeared with Elijah at the Transfiguration of our Lord, both Saints being manifested to S. Peter, S. James, and

Enoch.
Moses and
Elijah at the
Transfigura-
tion.

non sub altari collocentur, sed exaltentur super altare. . . . Quonam igitur modo super altare dixerim exaltandos eos, qui nunc sub altare quiescunt? Visioni utique et contemplatione non prælatione." He believes that an increase of vision will be theirs (*Serm.* IV. t. iii.).

¹ "Faith was the ground of the translation, because his pleasing God is specially mentioned before this took place; and such pleasing implies faith. The circumstances in which Enoch lived gave prominence to his faith" (Bishop Westcott, *in loc.*).

The Translation of Enoch was "a change which passed upon him without death from corruptibility to incorruptibility, from the natural body to the spiritual" (Alford, *in loc.*).

S. John in their glorified bodies. "They were the two," said Archbishop Trench, "of whom one had not died (cf. Eccclus. xlviii. 9), and the other had no sooner tasted of death than probably his body was withdrawn from under the dominion of death and of him that had the power of death (Deut. xxxiv. 6 ; Jude 9): the two, therefore, whose apparition in glorified bodies before the day of resurrection had less in it perplexing than that of any others would have had."¹

There is a long argument by Bishop Andrewes, in his reply to Cardinal Bellarmine, as to whether Enoch and Elijah in their glorified bodies are in Heaven or not. Bishop Andrewes first gives strong reasons for rejecting the theory that Enoch and Elijah are the two Heavenly Witnesses. The Cardinal held this view, and further denied that Enoch and Elijah were in Heaven before our Lord's Ascension. He uses the text, "No man hath ascended up to Heaven, but He that came down from Heaven," etc. (S. John iii. 13) as an argument to prove his point. Bishop Andrewes replies that "to ascend" is different from being "assumed" or "translated." To ascend to Heaven, by His own power, belongs to Christ alone, and that the text cannot be pressed so as to exclude Enoch and Elijah from Heaven. The whole argument between the Cardinal and Bishop Andrewes is deeply interesting, but it is too lengthy to permit more than a summary of its results. Bishop Andrewes concludes that Enoch and Elijah are in Heaven with their glorified

¹ Archbishop Trench, *Studies in the Gospels*, p. 204. S. Augustine says: "Evangelium testimonium habet a Lege et Prophetis. Ideo et in monte quando voluit ostendere Dominus noster Iesus gloriam suam, inter Moysen et Eliam stetit. Medius in honore ipse fulgebat ; Lex et Prophetæ a lateribus adtestabantur" (*Serm.* ccxxxii.).

The idea that Enoch and Elijah are the two Witnesses of Rev. xi. 3 who will be slain has some scanty patristic support. But it is *prima facie* untenable, because we cannot believe that Saints with glorified bodies will return to earth to suffer martyrdom.

bodies.¹ S. Irenæus places Enoch and Elijah in the Third Heaven, or Paradise, into which S. Paul was caught up.² He says that the translation of Enoch and Elijah, with their natural bodies, was “a prophecy of the assumption of those who were spiritual,” and that “the elders tell us that those who were translated (*i.e.* Enoch and Elijah) were translated to that place . . . where Paul the Apostle, when he was carried in (εἰσκομισθεῖς) heard words unspeakable,” etc. Tertullian, S. Epiphanius, S. Jerome, and the Fathers generally are in accord with S. Irenæus.

We have next to consider the case of the Saints who arose at our Lord's Resurrection. The fact that S. Matthew *alone* (xxii. 52) mentions this resurrection of the Saints, cannot weigh with any intelligent Christian for a moment, unless he is prepared to forfeit his Christianity by rejecting the raising of Lazarus because it is recorded by S. John alone.³

¹ Bishop Andrewes, *Responsio ad Bellarminum*, pp. 328-360.

² “Ὅπου γε Ἐνὼχ εὐρεσθήσας τῷ Θεῷ ἐν σώματι μετετέθη, τὴν μετάρθωσιν τῶν δικαίων προμηνεύων. Καὶ Ἡλίας, ὡς ἦν ἐν τῇ τοῦ πλάσματος ὑποστάσει, ἀνελήφθη, τὴν ἀνάληψιν τῶν πνευματικῶν προφητεύων . . . διὸ καὶ λέγουσι οἱ πρεσβύτεροι, τῶν ἀποστόλων μαθηταί, τοὺς μετατεθέντας ἐκεῖσε μετατεθῆναι . . . ἐν ᾧ καὶ Παῦλος ἀπόστολος εἰσκομισθεὶς ἤκουσεν ἄρρητα ῥήματα,” κ.τ.λ. (S. Irenæus, *Hæc.* V. c. v.).

S. Jerome says: “Enoch translatus est in carne. Elias carneus raptus est in *cælum*; necdum mortui, et *paradisi* iam coloni; habent membra cum quibus rapti sunt et translati” (S. Jerome, *Ep. ad Pammachum*, *Op.* tom. ii. sec. 29). So S. Epiphanius (*Ancoratus*, tom. ii. p. 101) and Tertullian (*De Resurrect. Carnis*, c. lviii.). S. Thomas Aquinas identifies “*cælum*” and “*Paradisus*” as S. Jerome does. “Oportet non aliud intelligere per *cælum*, et aliud per *paradisum*, sed unum et idem per utrumque, scilicet gloriam Sanctorum, sed secundum aliud et aliud. *Cælum* enim dicit altitudinem quamdam cum claritate, *paradisus* vero quamdam iucundam suavitatem” (*Lect.* ii. in 2 *Cor.* xii.).

³ Certain modern heretical critics unhesitatingly reject the truth of the raising of Lazarus for this reason. But scholars of this type, who reject the conclusions of the Catholic Church upon the authority of the Gospels, do not apparently desire to be reckoned amongst the *fideles*,

The Fathers consider that the Old Testament Saints, who were glorified through our Lord's visit to the place of souls departed, were included in this resurrection related by S. Matthew. But one reason for this resurrection may have been to confirm the faith of those to whom they appeared. The opened graves were in Jerusalem, and the evidential value of their appearing may well have consisted in the fact that Saints recently departed were included in this resurrection, such as S. Joseph, Simeon, Anna, and S. John the Baptist.¹ "These were permitted to show themselves to many who had known them during their earthly life and could testify to their identity. Thus the resurrection of the body was illustrated to chosen witnesses who would impart the truth to others. S. Matthew, a resident in Jerusalem, speaks of what he knows and has seen; and it was open to any one who was able, to confute his marvellous tale. No one has ever attempted to do this till critics of the nineteenth century undertook the unsatisfactory task, and accomplished it by various heroic manœuvres which show much ingenuity, but little faith." ²

It is thus clear that Enoch, Elijah, Moses, and the Saints who arose with our Lord's Resurrection are even now in the and therefore it is just to refuse to them the title of "Christians" in its true sense.

¹ We have already alluded in Chap. II. to this passage and noted the reference to it of S. Ignatius (*Magn.* ix.). Cornelius à Lapide (*in loc.*) believes that certain Old Testament Saints rose with our Lord, as well as Saints recently departed. He quotes Origen, S. Jerome, and S. Clement of Alexandria to support the view that they went to Heaven with our Lord, and did not return to their graves after a mere transitory resurrection.

Origen says: "Those that then rose did not again die" (*Contra Cels.* ii. 16). S. Epiphanius says: "That they entered into Jerusalem here on earth *first* is clear. But before the Saviour ascended into Heaven, no one had gone thither until these went up together with Him" (*Hær.* LXXV. c. viii.).

² These words are quoted from a thoughtful and scholarly monograph on the subject by the Rev. W. J. Deane, M.A., in *The Thinker* for February, 1894.

Church Triumphant with their bodies as well as their souls. Their position in the Heavenly Mansions is thus superior to that of the disembodied spirits of "just men made perfect," inasmuch as they are even now not "unclothed," but "clothed upon." When we consider the unique position of the Blessed Virgin in the economy of Redemption, it is difficult to believe that she is numbered amongst the disembodied spirits of the Church Triumphant.

It is difficult to believe that Almighty God would honour Enoch, Elijah, Moses, and the Saints who arose at His Resurrection with an honour which He withheld from His Mother, who was knit so closely to Him by the unique and ineffable privilege of her Divine Maternity. Upon a matter concerning which Holy Writ is silent, it is our duty to consider what is most fitting for us to believe, in accordance with the analogy of the Revelation of God to man in its broad aspects. Where a particular belief is universally held by the majority of Christian people in the world, even if it be not strictly *de fide*, it is not in accordance with the Christian instinct to fly in the face of that belief. It is our wisdom to regard such a belief as a *secondary* truth of Christianity which has its due place in Christian thought, in subordination to *primary* truths.

It is quite clear that the majority of Christians now in the world believe that the Blessed Virgin is not in an inferior state to that of the embodied Saints. The majority of Christians firmly believe that the Blessed Virgin is now glorified, in body and soul, above all the Saints of the Church Triumphant. When the term "majority" is used we have to set the two hundred and forty millions of Catholics in communion with Rome, and the one hundred millions of the Eastern Church, in one category of a common belief on this subject. The Protestant communities, who practically

The Blessed
Virgin in the
Church
Triumphant.

Belief of the
majority of
Christians that
the Blessed
Virgin Mary
is glorified in
body and soul.

deny this belief,¹ number eighty-five millions, and form but a fourth of the adherents of Latin and Greek Christianity added together.

Although the thirty millions of the Anglican Communion have ceased officially to observe August 15th in memory of the "Passing of the Blessed Virgin in body and soul to glory," it is not to be inferred thereby that Anglicans, as a corporate body, deny the belief of the majority of Christians. It is true that Bishop Cosin,² in his *Notes on the Book of Common Prayer* explains the

¹ It must, however, be remembered that so prominent a Reformer as Bullinger, the successor of Zwingli as chief pastor of Zurich (A.D. 1504—1575), and himself a strong Zwinglian on the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist, yet expressed his belief in the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin as follows: "We do believe that the holy chamber of the Virgin—the Mother of God, and the Temple of the Holy Ghost—that is to say, *her Sacred Body*, has been assumed into Heaven" (Bullinger, *Lib. de origine erroris*, c. xvi.).

Brentius, a Lutheran Divine, says: "It might well be that as Enoch was translated in body into Heaven, and as many bodies of the Saints did rise with Christ, so Mary also might in body be assumed into Heaven" (quoted on p. 161 of Anthony Stafford's *Female Glory*).

² Bishop Cosin says of the Festival of the Assumption: "Omitted in our Kalendar because there had been so many fabulous and superstitious stories devised about it." He quotes the legend as embellished by Bernardine de Bustis from the original *De Transitu Mariæ* (Bernardinus de Bustis, *Mariale*, Pars. XI. Sermon. i.). This writer has caused other difficulties by his exaggerated language about the Blessed Virgin, and Bishop Cosin's position is an instance of the difficulty created by substituting legends for purely theological considerations in dealing with this subject. At the same time he quotes with approval the words of Durandus: "Veritas tamen est, quod primo assumpta est in *anima*; utrum vero corpus in terra remansit incertum habetur . . . pie tamen credendum est, *eam totaliter fuisse assumptam*" (*Rat. Div. Off. lib. VII. c. xxiv.*)

Bishop Cosin does not touch the *a priori* theological reasons for the Assumption. He addresses himself solely to the unhistorical character of the legends (*Works*, vol. v. p. 203).

We may, however, set against Bishop Cosin's view that of Anthony Stafford. It has already been explained that the importance of his book is owing to the fact that it was licensed by Archbishop Laud, and

omission of the Festival on account of the unhistorical character of the Apocryphal account of the Bishop Ken. Assumption, but his contemporary Bishop Ken, in his *Christian Year* writes :

Heaven with transcendent joys her entrance graced,
Next to His Throne her Son His Mother placed;
And here below, now she's of Heaven possessed,
All generations are to call her bless'd.

Hymn for First Sunday after Epiphany, p. 64.

Bishop Pearson states plainly that the Blessed Virgin is *in Heaven* with our Lord in the following words :
" If Elisabeth cried out with so loud a voice, ' *Blessed art thou among women,*' when Christ was but newly conceived in her womb, what expressions of honour and admiration can we think sufficient now that Christ is in Heaven, and *that Mother with Him ?*" (*On the Creed*, vol. i. p. 278).

Blunt's *Dictionary of Doctrinal and Historical Theology* may be considered fairly representative of the theology of the Caroline Divines and of the best epoch of Tractarianism. After dealing with the Apocryphal account of the Assumption, and stating that it " rests on no historical basis," the writer proceeds as follows : " On the other hand, those who do not feel themselves bound strictly by historical evidence in such a case as this will find little difficulty in believing that the tradition represents a *truth*. It is certain that the bodies of some of the holy dead have already risen, for one of the many marvellous circumstances attending our Lord's death was that '*the graves were opened; and many bodies of the Saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after His Resurrection, and went into the Holy City, and appeared unto many*' (S. Matt. xxvii. 52). Thus there is no *a priori* difficulty in the way of supposing that the

he quotes Bullinger and Brentius amongst Protestants, and S. John Damascene and Peter Damian amongst Catholics, as affirming the Assumption (*The Female Glory*, pp. 160-163).

body of S. Mary arose from the grave shortly after death : and, indeed, if such a resurrection would have ministered to the glory of her risen and ascended Son (as the resurrection of the other Saints apparently did), it seems as probable in her case as in that of the others. . . . It would also seem very fitting that the holy body, which was the vehicle of so mighty an event as the Incarnation of God, should be preserved from the corruption of the grave, and should be at once received into that Blessed Place where He, Who had taken His Manhood of its substance, had Himself gone, in His Manhood to dwell" (Blunt's *Dict. of Doctr. and Hist. Theol.* 1872 ed. p. 55).

This extract is a moderate statement of the view tenable amongst Catholics in communion with the See of Canterbury.¹ It is an eminently reasonable view, and is in

¹ We may add to this Anglican testimony the witness of the Council of Bethlehem. The first portion of it has previously been quoted in Chap. I., and we here quote the remainder in Robertson's translation of the Romaic original. "What is it that can be intended by a great Sign in Heaven (Apoc. xii. 1), where God dwelleth and the Holy Powers are present? It is none other than the All-Holy Virgin (*Παύλῖα*), who was a great sign on the earth, since she brought forth God Incarnate, and in bringing Him forth remained undefiled and a Virgin, and is spoken of as a Sign in Heaven, because she ascended with her body to Heaven ; for although she left that immaculate tabernacle of hers in the tomb, yet after three days she was translated into Heaven with her body, as Christ also was taken up" (*Synod of Jerusalem*, Robertson, p. 35).

This is now the authorised belief of the Eastern Church as a whole. S. Thomas Aquinas and De Lugo may be taken to represent the teaching of Catholics in communion with Rome. S. Thomas says: "*Tertia [poena] fuit communis viris et mulieribus, scilicet, ut in pulverem reverterentur. Et ab hac immunis fuit Beata Virgo, quia cum corpore assumpta est in cœlum: credimus enim quod post mortem resuscitata fuerit et portata in cœlum: Surge, Domine, in requiem Tuam: Tu et arca sanctificationis Tuae*" (*Expos. I. in Salut. Angel. c. i.*). De Lugo says: "Propositio temeraria apud censores theologos est quæ communi Patrum sensui oppositur, aut quæ contra doctores theologos sentit sine sufficienti fundamento.

practical accord with the universal tradition of the Western
Mozley. and Eastern Church from the beginning. A

modern Anglican writer has well said, with regard to the legendary story of the Assumption: "The belief was never founded on that story: the story was founded on the belief. The belief, *which was universal*, required a defined shape, and that shape at length it found."¹ But the Church declined to permit

The legend of
the Assump-
tion declared
Apocryphal.

its belief to be expressed by legends. The belief in the *fact* of the Assumption was a theological conviction, based upon legitimate deductions from what God had already revealed concerning the

Talis erat si quis dicat Beatissimam Virginem non esse assumptam in corpore et anima in cœlum" (*De Virt. Fid. Div.* d. xx. s. 3). If we turn to modern authorities, Professor Lépiciér says: "Hæc propositio [*i.e.* the Assumption] nequit dici formaliter *de fide* cum ab ordinario Ecclesiæ magisterio tanquam dogma proposita non fuerit, nec explicite inveniatur contenta in Sacra Scriptura, sed implicite tantum pie erui possit ex aliquibus locis, verbi gratia *Surge, Domine, in requiem Tuam*," etc. (*Tractatus de Beatissima Virgine*, p. 210, Paris, 1901). "Mary's corporal Assumption into Heaven is so thoroughly implied in the notion of her personality, as given by Bible and dogma, that the Church can dispense with strict historical evidence of the fact" (*Wilhelm v. Scannel*, vol. ii. p. 220).

¹ Mozley, *Reminiscences*, etc., vol. ii. p. 368. We may add here some remarkable words from this writer, who was a shrewd observer of religious thought, though he did not profess to be a trained theologian: "What became of the household of Nazareth when death finally released it from its earthly ties? For thirty years was Jesus living there in the completest obedience, and in the most loving interchange of kindnesses and even benefits. It was a real and true companionship. It was an actual family. Jesus was no shadow. He was not *acting the part* of a son. We cannot doubt that He loved Mary to the fulness of His nature, which was Divine. It would be a very idle refinement to say that He loved her as man only, for in Him the human and Divine nature were united. But what is human nature without its objects and belongings? . . . The love of Mary and Joseph could not be bound by conditions of space or time. We may think it a terrible presumption to place Mary and Joseph the carpenter . . .

The Blessed Virgin

unique position of the Blessed Virgin as Θεοτόκος. The legend of the Apostles witnessing the Resurrection of the Blessed Virgin, however touching and beautiful in its details, must be relegated to the sphere of pious imagination.¹ The Apocryphal book which contained it fell necessarily under the condemnation of the Church. The Decree of Pope Gelasius in A.D. 494 condemned the book, ascribed falsely to Melito of Sardis, *De Transitu Mariæ* as uncanonical. It attempted to supply historical evidence for a mystery wrought in "the Silence of God," for which God had not thought fit to furnish the world with an authentic account of *how* or *when* it took place.² Historical evidence for any

near the Throne of the Universe. But it would be a far more terrible presumption to place them anywhere else. Can we possibly suppose them to be laid deep in the dull catacombs of the Intermediate State? Would the Son intermit His love, and stop the flow of His affections for thousands of years till the time arrived for the reappearance of Joseph and Mary in the innumerable crowd to be then gathered and scattered right and left? In a word, is there any one positive conception of the present state of Joseph and Mary so natural and so reasonable as that they are *now* with Christ, and where He is, at the Right Hand of the Father" (vol. ii. p. 355 *et seq.*).

¹ We are not hereby concerned to affirm that this legend may not contain elements of truth and fact under its unhistorical details. "The class of literature to which the Apocryphal Gospels belong was under great suspicion, and it is most probable that . . . many a genuine morsel of ancient tradition was neglected and perished because it could not easily be discriminated from the spurious matter that had grown up around it" (Coleridge, *The Preparation for the Incarnation*, p. 234).

² There is no historical evidence that the Blessed Virgin ever died, but the Church has always believed that she died, just as the Church without any historical evidence has believed that her body was assumed to Heaven after her death. S. Epiphanius, in his argument against the Antidicomarianites, applies to the Blessed Virgin Mary the vision of Rev. xii. He says: "S. John tells us, in the Apocalypse, that the dragon hastened against the Woman who had brought forth the Man-Child, and there were given to her the wings of an eagle, etc. This, then, may have been well fulfilled in Mary. However, οὐ πάντως δὲ

of the root-facts of the Christian religion has never been furnished upon such an irrefragible basis as to close the mouths of cavillers and unbelievers. Room is always left for faith that worketh by love, in humble obedience to the interpretation of Holy Writ by the living voice of the Church,

as the organ of the abiding presence of our Lord which His Spirit perpetually guides into mystery apart from historical all truth. It would be contrary to the whole evidence.

analogy of Divine revelation, to expect detailed historical evidence for the resurrection of the body of the Blessed Virgin by the Power and Love of her Divine Son. Such a manifestation of His Love for her is a sacred

ὀρίζομαι τοῦτο, καὶ οὐ λέγω ὅτι ἀθάνατος ἔμεινεν [*i.e.* that she remained without dying] ἀλλ' οὔτε διαβεβαιούμαι εἰ τέθνηκεν· ὑπερέβαλε γὰρ ἡ γραφή τὸν νοῦν τὸν ἀνθρώπινον, and has left the matter in suspense" (*Hæc.* lxxviii.). His line of argument seems to be that the silence of Scripture exalts her above other human beings, so that her perpetual virginity is beyond doubt. With regard to the Virgin's tomb at Gethsemane, we have S. John of Damascus (*Hom.* ii. 18) relating that in A.D. 451 Marcian and Pulcheria, having heard of the discovery of the Virgin's tomb, and the Church built over it, sent to Juvenal, Bishop of Jerusalem, desiring him to send her relics to Constantinople. Juvenal replied that the tomb was empty, and cites an ancient tradition that the Blessed Virgin Mary rose on the third day after her death and was assumed into Heaven. S. John of Damascus, writing in the eighth century, has no doubt about his historical facts, and the sepulchre of the Virgin was removed to Constantinople and placed in the Basilica *Ad S. Mariam in Blachernis*, which had been built by the Empress Pulcheria. S. Gregory of Tours (A.D. 550) gives an account of the Festival of the Assumption as celebrated in his day. He also says: "Dominus susceptum Virginis corpus sacratissimum in Paradisum deferri iussit, ubi nunc resumpta anima cum electis eius exultans æternitatis bonis, nullo occasuris fine, perfruitur" (*Lib. I. de Mirac.* c. iv.). We may add the testimonies of S. Andrew of Crete, A.D. 720 (*Hom. in Dorm. Deiparæ*); S. Germanus of Constantinople, A.D. 733 (*Hom. in Dorm.* etc.); and the later Greek Fathers generally. We also find the same teaching in S. Ildephonsus of Toledo, S. Anselm, Hugh and Richard of S. Victor, Fulbert of Chartres, and others. The allusion to the Assumption in Pseudo-Dionysius is so obscure that it is omitted, notwithstanding its citation by S. Andrew of Crete and others.

The Blessed Virgin

mystery of His Incarnation that immediately concerns what we may reverently term His private relation to her, and not the public relation of His Incarnate life to redeemed humanity in general. Such a private manifestation of His Power as raising her in body and soul to be with Him in His Glory cannot be regarded as a primary truth of revelation, but we may look upon it as a legitimate and natural deduction from the primary truths of the Catholic Faith.

It is a deduction from other revealed truths.

We may legitimately accept it, because its denial is more difficult than its acceptance. It is difficult indeed to believe that our Blessed Lord would permit the holy and sinless body of her from whom He took our nature to become the food of worms¹ and to see corruption, if the bodies of other eminent saints were translated to Heaven, as we are told in Holy Scripture. As the divinely appointed Θεοτόκος, the Blessed Virgin is pre-eminently the first of created beings. She is exalted above Enoch, Elijah, and the other saints who have risen with their bodies, in a measure which transcends all thought, by virtue of her nearness to God as the predestined and willing instrument of His Incarnation. Theology teaches us this fact, and, as its necessary corollary and complement, teaches us also that every honour that can, by God's Will, legitimately accrue to a created being, rightly belongs to her whom "all generations shall call Blessed." If we

Its denial more difficult than its acceptance.

The Blessed Virgin is exalted beyond other saints who have risen with their bodies.

¹ The author of the sermon "De Assumptione Beatæ Virginis Mariæ," which appears with the works of S. Augustine (*Opp. S. Aug.* tom. vi. p. 1140), undoubtedly expressed the common sentiment of the Catholic Church when he said: "Corpus Virginis vermibus traditum, quia sentire non valeo, dicere perhorresco." S. Albert the Great, the master of Aquinas, applies the text, "*Thou shalt not suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption*," primarily to our Lord, and secondarily to the body of the Blessed Virgin, as being dear to God and sanctified by Him" (lib. IV. c. iv. *de Laudibus Beatæ Mariæ*).

believe her own words, "for He that is Mighty hath magnified me,"—if we further believe in her sinless purity, which alone raised her far above the level of the Saints who have already been raised with their bodies, it is reasonable to believe that her body is specially honoured by being in Heaven *now*, as we believe theirs to be.¹

It is not too much to say that it would do violence to the whole tenor of Christian teaching and to the reverent instincts of Catholic thought to believe anything else. The very legend is a witness to the belief of the whole Catholic Church from the beginning, in the hidden mystery of the resurrection of the Blessed Virgin.² The instinctive craving for details with regard to an event purposely and naturally enshrouded in silence and mystery, is part of the

The legend shows a desire for details which are necessarily withheld.

¹ Christendom has always cherished the relics of her saints. The account of the discovery of the relics of SS. Gervasius and Protasius at Milan, given by S. Ambrose (*Ep.* xxii.) and S. Augustine (*Conf.* ix. 7), and of the miracle wrought by these relics in restoring a blind man to sight, is a well-established fact. But the Church has never claimed to possess any relics of the body of the Blessed Virgin. Its sole thought was of her empty tomb, which tradition placed at Gethsemane (see S. John Damasc. *Hom.* ii. 18 in *Dormit. Beate Virginis Mariæ*). Professor Lépicier says: "Sed nec silendum est nusquam gentium reperiri reliquias etiam minimas corporis B. Mariæ: quod quidem haud leve est pro re nostra [*i.e.* the Assumption] indicium: cum Deus, Qui sanctorum reliquias a nobis religiose coli voluit, certe sinere haud potuisset ut sanctissimum Deiparæ corpus, de quo Ipsemet carnem sumpserat, incultum maneret" (*Tractatus de Beatissima Virgine*, p. 212, Paris, 1901).

² A modern French theologian takes very strong ground upon the subject of legendary testimony to the Assumption, which he considers to be a theological question rather than a matter of documents. He says: "Mais au point de vue théologique qui nous occupe, il vaut mieux négliger toutes ces questions de l'authenticité, de l'antiquité et du nombre des documents écrits, où la resurrection de la Sainte Vierge se trouve affirmée en termes exprès ou équivalement. Ce qu'il y a de

weakness of human nature from which the devotional life of the Church has never been entirely exempt. We see it in many of the recorded lives of the Saints, and recognise the need of the pruning knife. We may be thankful

The legend is an obstacle to reasonable belief. that the Gelasian Decrees applied the pruning knife to the legend of the Assumption, for its currency, despite this prohibition, has been the

one stumbling-block in the way of the acceptance of a truth which ought to be accepted from theological con-

The objection that the Festival of the Assumption was not observed till the seventh century. siderations alone. Some modern critics have objected to the recognition of this truth from the fact that the Festival of the "Dormitio," or Resurrection of the Blessed Virgin,¹ was not accepted in the West till the end of the sixth

or the beginning of the seventh century. But the East was the natural home of its observance, as the sphere of the

certain, c'est que ces documents ne remontent pas à la période apostolique et qu'il subsiste dans la tradition écrite un vide que les découvertes futures ne combleront pas, probablement. . . . — Le concept que nous renfermons, sous le nom d'Assomption, c'est-à-dire, la résurrection de Marie et sa présence en corps et en âme au ciel, est une matière doctrinale, absolument distincte des circonstances vraies ou fausses, que nous rapportent des ouvrages authentiques ou non, et plus ou moins anciens. Et puisque c'est une matière doctrinale, si l'Église nous enseigne à ce sujet, même implicitement, elle parle infailliblement, et personne ne peut faire dépendre son enseignement de l'authenticité plus ou moins problématique de récits historiques. La question du fait même de l'Assomption, au sens indiqué, la seule que nous occupé, appartient, en premier lieu, à la théologie" (*La Définition de l'Assomption de la T. S. Vierge*, par D. Paul Renaudin, O.S.B., Paris, 1902, pp. 106, 107, 94, 95).

¹ Dom Renaudin says: "Nous savons que la fête du 15 août n'a pas toujours été appelée exclusivement *Assomption*. Les autres noms . . . *Dormitio*, *Pausatio*, *Transitus*, *Quies*, n'excluent point l'idée de la résurrection de Marie; ils indiquent seulement que le point de vue principal est différent. De même, le terme *Assumptio* signifie *in recto* l'entrée triomphale dans le ciel de la Vierge ressuscitée, et *in obliquo* sa bienheureuse mort" (*Ibid.* p. 96).

Palestinian and Ephesine tradition.¹ The public observance of a Festival in honour of such a mystery of silence would naturally be delayed, until the Church had settled the Christological controversies which characterised the "Council period" of her history, and until the weird conceptions of Gnosticism had

The true reason for this delay.

¹ Monseigneur Duchèsne says that the Festival of the Assumption is of Byzantine origin, and that its observance cannot be traced at Rome before the end of the seventh century (*Christian Worship*, English ed. p. 272). But Dom Renaudin says that this conclusion from the written evidence of the Gregorian and Gelasian Sacramentaries cannot be accepted as accounting for all the facts which are involved in Monseigneur Duchèsne's theory. He says: "En effet, l'Orient célébrait l'Assomption au plus tard au vi^e siècle, puisque l'empereur Maurice (A.D. 582—602) trouvait la fête déjà établie, voulut lui assurer le plus d'éclat possible par des prescriptions positives émanant de son autorité impériale. Et les Papes, surtout S. Grégoire le Grand, contemporain et ami de Maurice, n'auraient pas manqué de réclamer, si, dans cette partie importante de l'Église qu'était l'Orient, on avait attribué un sens faux à une fête religieuse. À Jerusalem la tradition orale est constatée au vi^e siècle par l'auteur de *l'Itinéraire des Lieux saints*, écrit vers A.D. 570: '*In qua [valle Gethsemane] est basilica Sanctæ Mariæ, in qua monstretur sepulcrum de quo dicunt sanctam Mariam ad cælos fuisse sublatum.*' D'autre part, en Occident, les plus anciens et les plus importants documents, liturgiques et autres, ne présentent point la fête de l'Assomption comme venant d'être instituée dans l'Église romaine, à l'époque où eux-mêmes ont été écrits. Au contraire, ils en parlent comme d'une solennité déjà entrée dans la coutume, et ayant une origine ancienne." He mentions the decree of Pope Nicholas I., which uses the word "*antiquitus*" with regard to the observation of the Vigil of the Assumption. He alludes to the use of the Collect "*Veneranda nobis*" for the Assumption in the Gelasian Sacramentary. He concludes with saying that "L'étude des manuscrits les plus anciens a conduit les érudits de notre temps à conclure qu'il est impossible de reconnaître dans ces deux sacramentaires ce qui appartient réellement à saint Gélase et à saint Grégoire le Grand. Mais il n'est pas moins vrai que le résultat négatif de leurs investigations, poursuivies à l'aide des seuls monuments écrits, ne saurait expliquer l'institution et l'éclat de la fête en Occident au vii^e siècle" (Dom Renaudin's *Assomption*, etc., pp. 107, 108).

died away. The argument from delay in the public recognition of a mystery of *secondary* truth, in an age when *primary* truths had to be fought for, will have no weight with any serious student of Church history. It would have been contrary to the very idea of the due proportion of the Christian revelation, if the Church of the second and third century had laid public stress upon the mysterious resurrection of the Blessed Virgin in the face of current Gnosticism, and it would have been still more so if this truth had been brought prominently forward during the Arian, Nestorian, or Eutychian controversies. The Church could not prominently set forward special glories and privileges of the Blessed Virgin whilst her very title of Θεοτόκος, and all that it implied, were openly denied by a most influential and powerful body of heretics.

We may conclude that the belief of the Catholic Church from the beginning upon this subject is founded upon valid theological reasons.¹ The object of these pages is confessedly to promote the reunion of Christendom by the explanation of differences. There is nothing to

The belief in the Assumption based upon theological reasons.

¹ Apart from theological reasons pure and simple, there is the witness of Scripture, in its mystical sense, constantly applied to the Blessed Virgin Mary by the Fathers and Catholic writers. To deny the typical and mystical sense of Holy Writ is a pure modernism, which has sprung from the exclusive literalism of modern historical and textual criticism. We cannot *prove* the resurrection of the Blessed Virgin from the mystical sense of Scripture, but it affords a collateral testimony which need not be neglected. S. Modestus, Patriarch of Jerusalem (A.D. 620), in his sermon on the Assumption, applies to it Ps. cxxxii. 8, "*Arise, O God, into Thy resting place, Thou and the Ark of Thy strength.*" S. Thomas does the same, and the Apocalyptic vision of the Ark of the Covenant in Rev. xi. 19 has been applied to the Blessed Virgin Mary in glory. S. Modestus also applies in the same way Ps. xlv. 9, "*Upon Thy right hand did stand the Queen,*" etc. S. John of Damascus (*Hom. i. in Dorm. Beatæ Virginis Mariæ*) applies the type of the Ark of Noah to the Blessed Virgin, as well as the Ark of the Covenant and the Burning

keep Christians apart in the belief that the Blessed Virgin is now glorified in body as well as in soul in the Kingdom of Heaven. This belief is not *per se* the cause of any exaggerations in devotion to the Blessed Virgin herself. Such exaggerations as exist are undoubtedly founded upon her Divine Maternity, which is a primary truth of the Catholic Creed, binding upon every Christian as a matter of faith. What we have to guard against is not the conception of her sinlessness or her resurrection to present glory, but an untrue conception of our *Saviour* exclusively as our *Judge*, and the equally untrue conception that His Mother is more merciful to sinners than He is *Who died for sinners*. This tendency can be guarded against by all Catholics

Bush, and closes with the declaration that the Body of the Blessed Virgin could not see corruption. S. Theodore the Studite (A.D. 826) takes the same line. The Bride of the Canticles (vi. 9, viii. 5) was also generally applied in a mystic sense to the Assumption: "*Quæ est ista quæ ascendit*," etc. S. Bernard thus uses the Canticles: "Processit igitur gloriosa Virgo, cuius lampas ardentissima ipsis quoque angelis lucis miraculo fuit, ut dicerent '*Quæ est ista quæ progreditur, sicut aurora consurgens*,'" etc. (*Serm. II. de Beata Virgine Maria*).

Canon Liddon's "Christmastide" Sermon iv., which applies the Ark of the Covenant to our Lord's Incarnate life, moves in a parallel train of thought with the patristic interpretation, and deserves careful study. The vision of "the woman clothed with the sun" in Rev. xii. is applied to the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary by certain writers of weight, but its interpretation will be discussed in a note at the close of this chapter. It succeeds the vision of the Ark of the Covenant in Heaven, which an unknown writer, whose works appear with those of S. Ambrose, describes as follows: "Now what else should we say the Ark was but holy Mary? The Ark bore within it the tables of the Testament, but Mary bore the Heir of the same Testament itself. The former contained in it the Law, the latter the Gospel. The one had the voice of God, the other His Word. The Ark indeed was radiant within and without with the splendour of virginity. The one was adorned with earthly gold, the other with heavenly" (*Serm. xlii. 6 int. Opp. S. Ambr.*).

who loyally adhere to the teaching of their authoritative formularies, whether Roman, Eastern, or Anglican, and we do not need to combat it by attacking venerable and reasonable beliefs upon the privileges of the Blessed Virgin, which are cherished by the majority of Christians throughout the world.

Adhesion to
authorised
formularies
the true safe-
guard against
excess.

NOTE TO CHAPTER IV. ON REV. xii. 1-6.

THE Apostle S. John was "the disciple whom Jesus loved," to whom the Blessed Virgin was committed by our Lord from the Cross with the words, "Behold thy Mother." He was thus nearest and dearest of the Apostles both to the Blessed Virgin and to our Lord. In his Vision at Patmos he saw our Lord in glory. Was it not in accordance with his intimate relation with her that he should also see the Blessed Virgin in glory?

Therefore it is natural to conclude that, since Rev. i. 10-20 records the Vision of our Lord in glory, Rev. xii. 1-6 is the Vision of our Lady in glory. This most obvious and natural interpretation of the Vision of "the Woman clothed with the sun" has been obscured for two reasons. First, the patristic authority for it is divided, and it cannot be said to rest on the general consent of the Fathers. Secondly, the reaction from exaggerated devotion to the Blessed Virgin has caused her due position in the economy of Redemption to be minimised and obscured, since the Reformation, by Protestant Divines in such a manner that any forced interpretation of Rev. xii. 1-6 is preferred to the most natural and obvious view of its meaning. We have already shown that the Fathers see in the Blessed Virgin not only the Second Eve, but a personified type of the Church. It is therefore quite legitimate to consider the "Woman clothed with the sun" as a type of the Church in a secondary sense, if we maintain that this vision, in its primary sense, applies to the Blessed Virgin in glory. To take Anglican authorities first. Amongst the Caroline Divines we find Dr. Frank saying: "The Virgin Mother, the Eternal Son; the most blessed among women, the fairest of the sons of

men; *the Woman clothed with the sun*, the sun compassed with a woman: she the gate of Heaven; He the King of Glory that came forth" (*Sermons*, vol. i. p. 77).

Mr. Sadler's Commentary on the Revelation treats this passage at considerable length. He says: "In this chapter we seem to have an account of the great warfare between good and evil in this world. The key to it seems to be the primeval prophecy, '*I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed.*' . . . '*And there appeared a great wonder in Heaven; a Woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.*'¹ . . . *And she brought forth a Man-Child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her Child was caught up unto God and to His Throne.*' Who was this Child thus brought forth, thus destined to rule all nations, and caught up to God and to His Throne? It seems blasphemy to suggest any name but One, and that the Name of Jesus. But who, then, was the woman? He had but one mother, and that a lowly Virgin, but richly endowed with the highest grace which God can bestow—that which shone most conspicuously in her own Son—the grace of humility. It was a great thing for her to be clad with the sun, to have the moon under her, and to be crowned with twelve stars; but what was all this, multiplied ten thousand times over, to what God brought about in her that she should have the unspeakable glory of being the bearer in her womb, as being His Mother, of the Only-Begotten Son of God. . . . In her sin and evil were already conquered,² for if God had begun in her so wondrous a mystery of grace He would bring all to a glorious conclusion. It is a great thing to be clothed with the sun, but is it not said of the righteous that they shall shine forth

¹ The crowning of the Blessed Virgin in sacred art and in the pages of devotional writers is derived from this verse. The "Elders" were crowned; the righteous shall be crowned. ("Let no man take thy crown.") The rejection of the idea of the crowning of the Blessed Virgin, when all other Saints are crowned, is a piece of pure Protestantism which confutes itself. A beautiful window representing the Crowning of the Blessed Virgin has been placed in Lichfield Cathedral under the auspices of Dean Luckock, whose cautiousness as a theologian is beyond reproach.

² Prebendary Sadler here declares his belief in the absolute sinlessness of the Blessed Virgin.

as the sun in the glory of their Father? But does not this agree with a later part of the Vision? for after her Son is raised to the Throne of God she seems to disappear, and her place—not only her place, but her very person—to be taken by the Church. Now what is the Church? It is called the Body of Christ. . . . But is the Church anything to the Virgin? Is the Virgin anything to the Church? The answer is, that *if the Incarnation had not taken place in that Blessed Woman, the Church would have been non-existent*. . . . The glory surrounding her is beyond measure transcendent, but it is far below what took place in her. If we only try to realise how God magnified her by making her the human channel and means in which the Eternal Word was made flesh, we shall not think it strange that she was arrayed in such splendour” (*Comm. on Rev.* pp. 151–153).

The Vision naturally presents certain difficulties of interpretation. It is a wonder “in Heaven,” where there is no past or future. The glorious vision of the Blessed Virgin, as the Θεοτόκος, points to her present condition in Heaven, which is the consequence of the Incarnation. The Vision reveals the Blessed Virgin in her present glory, before the Child is born, but there is no idea of *time* or succession of events in it. It is as God saw her from all eternity in her predestined glory as the Second Eve, whose seed should crush the Dragon. The final victory over evil is assured just as the final glory of the Woman clothed with the sun is assured. The secondary sense of the Vision is alternated abruptly with the primary sense. Some of the Fathers saw a difficulty in applying the words ὠδίνουσα καὶ βασανιζομένη τεκεῖν to the painless and Ineffable Birth of our Lord from His Virgin Mother. But no such difficulty exists. The Vision here passes to its secondary sense of the Second Eve, as the type of the Church, persecuted by the world-power and the Dragon. We may apply the words to the *Mater Dolorosa*, as suffering with the Church by the Cross of Christ, and finding in her mystery of sorrow a fulfilment of her Son’s words, “*If they have persecuted Me they will also persecute you*” (S. John xv. 20). The sorrows and persecutions of the Church are also the sorrows of the Mother of Redeemed Humanity. “*Crucietur*

pariendo; non ut pariat Christum corporaliter sed ut Ipsum spiritualiter pariat, hoc est, membra eius mystica" (*Hortus Pastororum* (Jacob. Marchant), ed. 1633, p. 122). We seem to see in this Vision incidents of the past and present interwoven into the everlasting "now" of Eternity. The glory of the Blessed Virgin, assumed into Heaven, in her body as well as her soul, for all eternity, is the background of the picture, the underlying certainty in the mystical interpretation of the Vision. And then incidents of history, now applying to the Blessed Virgin, and now to the Church, interchange their imagery in rapid succession. We have the Incarnation of the Man-Child and His glorious Ascension to the Throne of God, with the parallel fact of the exaltation of His Blessed Mother, as "the Woman clothed with the sun," in Heaven. And then the scene changes to earth, and we see Herod's seeking the Divine Child's life in verse 4, where the Dragon stands to devour the Child as soon as it is born. Beyond this fact again we see the persecution of our Lord in His faithful members for all time. The woman's flight into the desert place in verse 6 is primarily to be applied to the flight of the Holy Family into Egypt, and secondarily of the members of Christ under persecution, with the underlying promise of succour under trial for the Church in every age, until her warfare is accomplished and her victory won. "The war in Heaven" brings before us the ministry of Angels battling for the Church against the powers of darkness, and verse 13 repeats the idea of the flight and preservation of the Woman. The wings given to her (*πτέρυγες τοῦ ἀετοῦ τοῦ μεγάλου*), as S. Epiphanius (*Hær.* lxxviii.) thinks, brings forth the idea of the person of the Blessed Virgin in her flight from earth to Heaven; whilst, as applied to the persecuted Church, we are reminded of Exod. xix. 14, *ἀνέλαβον ὑμᾶς ὡσεὶ ἐπὶ πτερύγων ἀετῶν καὶ προσηγαγόμεν ὑμᾶς πρὸς ἑμάντόν*. God delivered Israel, and took up the Church of the Old Covenant on eagle's wings unto Himself. This applies equally to the Church of the New Covenant, in its great type, the Second Eve. In the flood cast forth by the Dragon in verse 13, we see the fulfilment of Isaiah's words: "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall raise up a standard against him" (Isa. lix. 19). The earth helping the Woman

by swallowing the flood (verse 16) shows us the Lord "sitting above the water-flood" and guiding the nations to accept the Gospel of Christ, so that the Dragon's stirring up "the fierceness of men shall turn to God's praise," as it did when the barbarian nations overthrew the Roman Empire of the West, and were themselves brought into the Catholic Church. The continued persecution and ultimate triumph of the Woman has its application in the Blessed Virgin herself, as well as in the Church. If it can be said of our Lord "in all their afflictions He was afflicted" (Isa. lxiii. 9), and that He is *now* bearing the sorrows and trials of the Church Militant, this may also in its due measure be said of her, and of the other Saints in glory, the *νέφος μαρτύρων* of Heb. xii. 1. May we not say truly that the Blessed Virgin suffers with our Lord in the dishonour cast upon His Virgin-Birth by heretics who claim not only to call themselves Christians, but to hold office in a Church which claims to hold and defend the Catholic Creeds? In conclusion, we may say that the Vision of Rev. xii. 1-6 points out clearly to us the present exaltation of the Blessed Virgin, concurrently with its further application to the trials and final victory of the Church.

Certain testimonies may be added to confirm this explanation. Cardinal Newman has dealt very fully with the passage in question. He says: "If there be an Apostle on whom, *a priori*, our eyes would be fixed, as likely to teach us about the Blessed Virgin, it is S. John, to whom she was committed by our Lord on the Cross. . . . The anticipation is confirmed *a posteriori*, for one of the earliest and fullest of our informants concerning her dignity, as being the Second Eve, is Irenæus, who came to Lyons from Asia Minor, and had been taught by the immediate disciples of S. John. . . . Now I do not deny, of course, that under the image of the Woman the Church is signified; but what I would maintain is this, that the holy Apostle would not have spoken of the Church under this particular image *unless* there had existed a Blessed Virgin Mary, who was exalted on high, and the object of veneration to all the faithful. No one doubts that the *Man-Child* spoken of is an allusion to our Lord: why, then, is not the Woman an allusion to His Mother? This is surely the obvious sense of the words; of course it has a further sense also, which is the scope of the image; doubtless

the Child represents the children of the Church, and doubtless the Woman represents the Church, . . . but what is the sense of the symbol? *Who* are the Woman and the Child? I answer, They are not personifications, but Persons. This is true of the Child, therefore it is true of the Woman. But again: not only Mother and Child, but a serpent is introduced into the vision. Such a meeting of man, woman, and serpent has not been found in Scripture since the beginning of Scripture, and now it is found at its end. . . . If the dragon of S. John is the same as the serpent of Moses, and the Man-Child is 'the seed of the woman,' why is not the woman herself she whose seed the Man-Child is? And if the first woman is not an allegory, why is the second? If the first woman is Eve, why is not the second Mary? . . . And let it be observed, moreover, that in this passage, from the allusion in it to the history of the Fall, she may be said still to be represented under the character of the Second Eve. I make a further remark: it is sometimes asked, Why do not the sacred writers mention our Lady's greatness? I answer, She was, or may have been, alive when the Apostles and Evangelists wrote; there was just one book of Scripture certainly written after her death, and that book does (if I may so speak) canonise her" (Newman's *Letter to Pusey*, pp. 61-65).

The Commentary on the Apocalypse compiled by Aretas, probably not later than the fifth century, says of this Vision: "Οἱ μὲν εἰς τὴν τοῦ Κυρίου μητέρα ὑπέλαβον τὴν ὀπτασίαν. Some have interpreted this vision to be the Mother of the Lord" (Aret. *in Apoc.* p. 351). The exclusive interpretation of the Vision in this manner must have been known to S. Hippolytus (A.D. 235) and to S. Methodius (A.D. 312), for they both combat it, and fall into the opposite error of exclusively interpreting it of the Church. S. Victorinus of Petan (A.D. 290) combines both interpretations by holding that the Man-Child was literally our Lord, and so the Woman, though mystically interpreted by him as the Church, must literally be His Mother (*De Christo et Antichristo*, vol. xvii. p. 422). An unknown writer on the Apocalypse, whose work has been attributed to S. Ambrose, says: "By the Woman here we may understand the Blessed Virgin Mary, because she is the Mother of the Church, for she

brought forth Him Who is the Head of the Church" (*Expos. Apocalyp.* c. xii. *int. Opp.* S. Ambr.). An unknown writer whose work (*De Symb. ad Catech.*) is found amongst the works of S. Augustine, says: "In the Apocalypse of S. John the Apostle it is written that the Dragon stood before the Woman, who was ready to be delivered. . . . Now none of you is ignorant that the Dragon is the Devil, and that by the Woman is signified the Virgin Mary, *quæ Caput nostrum integra integrum peperit*" (*De Symb. ad Catech.* iv. *int. Opp.* S. August.). The last clause shows that the writer saw no difficulty in the words *ὁδίνουσα, κ.τ λ.*, as they occur in the Vision. He evidently applied them mystically, and asserted the mystery of the painless Virgin-Birth at the same time. We have already dealt with the application of the Vision by S. Epiphanius to the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, and we have also noted the similar interpretation of the Council of Bethlehem. The testimony of S. Epiphanius is perhaps the most important of those cited; but, although the whole weight of evidence during the first six centuries is of a divided character, enough has been adduced to show that the application of the Vision to the Blessed Virgin was widely held. It would also be manifestly unfair to exclude this interpretation absolutely from the point of view of those Fathers, who emphasise the application of the Vision to the Church. It would be difficult to prove that they did so exclusively.

As Editor of S. Ephraem Syrus in the "Library of the Fathers," Dr. Pusey is responsible for the note on p. 85 concerning S. Ephraem's interpretation of Apoc. xii. 2. He says: "I saw there the pure Conception (of the Body of our Lord), the Church and the Son within her. The cloud was the likeness of her that bare Him, and her type the Heaven." The note says: "The meaning seems to be—I saw His pure conception of Mary who, with the Son within her, is the type of the Church. The fact that two views of the passage existed shows that it admitted a *twofold application*"; and after quoting the passage cited above from *De Symb. ad Catech.* iv., he proceeds: "This view of S. Mary as the type of the Church seems absolutely necessary to reconcile the two interpretations."

CHAPTER V.

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS.

“ Πάντων ἀπογνοῦσα τῶν ἄλλων, ἐπὶ τὸν Θεὸν καταφεύγει . . . καὶ τὴν Παρθένον Μαρίαν ἱκετεύουσα βοηθῆσαι παρθένῳ κινδυνευούσῃ ” (S. Greg. Naz. *Orat.* xxiv. 10, 11).

“ Καταφεύγωμεν μὲν ἐπὶ τὰς τῶν Ἀγίων πρεσβείας καὶ παρακαλῶμεν ὥστε ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν δεηθῆναι ” (S. Chrys. *in Genes. Hom.* xliv. 2).

IN the Introduction to this book it was shown that the authorised formularies of the Roman, Eastern, and Anglican Churches were in practical accord upon the lawfulness of asking the Blessed Virgin and the Saints to pray for us. It was also shown that this devotional practice of the Catholic Church had its due limits, as laid down in those formularies, and that to overpass those limits was contrary to the fundamental principles of Catholic theology. The object of this volume is, as has been before stated, to minimise points of difference and to emphasise points of agreement, in order to facilitate Catholic reunion by means of reasonable explanations. It is in this spirit that the great subject of “the Communion of Saints” must be approached, in order to find the true basis for that relation to them which Catholics have maintained by asking them for their prayers.

We turn first to the witness of Holy Writ. The Invocation of the Saints rests on our belief in their Intercession for us. We find the germ of the Intercession of the Saints in the Old Testament. God declared, through Jeremiah, “*Though Moses and Samuel*

Invocation
depends on
Intercession.

stand before Me, My mind is not towards this people" (Jer.

The germ of the Intercession of the Saints in Old Testament and Apocrypha. xv. 1). This is a plain intimation that, even in the place of departed spirits, before the Old Testament Saints were translated to glory by our Lord, the idea of their intercession for Israel, even though it could not in this case prevail, was revealed to Jeremiah.¹ At the close of the Old Testament Canon the witness of the Apocrypha testifies that the same belief was current amongst the Jews, as was the belief in prayers for the dead. Neither belief was touched by the teaching of our Lord, Who set aside all that was corrupt in current Jewish teaching. In Tobit xii. 12 Raphael says, "*When thou didst pray, I offered thy prayer unto the Lord,*" which is the same doctrine as that of Rev. viii. 3, 4, where the Angel offers the prayers of the Saints as the incense of the golden censer. The Intercession of the Saints is thus perpetually linked with the Ministry of Angels as offering their prayers and ours before the Throne of God. Judas Maccabeus sees, in a vision, the High Priest Onias, and "*Jeremiah the Prophet of God,*" interceding for the people (2 Macc. xv. 12-14).²

¹ Thorndike says: "And I will use those texts of the Old Testament (*i.e.* to prove the Intercession of Saints) where Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and David are in consideration, and are alleged to God on behalf of His people: Gen. xxvi. 5, 24; Exod. xxxii. 13; Deut. ix. 27; 1 Kings xi. 12, 32, 33, 34, xv. 4; 2 Kings viii. 19, xix. 34, xx. 6; Es. xxxviii. 35; 1 Kings xviii. 36; 1 Chron. xxix. 18. For, as our Saviour argueth well, that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, are alive and shall rise again because *God is not the God of the dead*; so the consequence is good that what God doth for their sakes, He doth it for their mediation or intercession" (*Works*, vol. v. pt. 2, p. 754).

² Origen cites the passages from Tobit and the Maccabees to show that the Saints intercede for us, and the Angels offer up their prayers. When Article VI. requires us to admit that the Apocrypha cannot be used to prove doctrines on its own sole authority, it does not exclude the valuable witness of the Apocrypha in testimony to the current

The evidence of the New Testament. more direct. In Rev. v. 8. we have the Saints in glory, who have been redeemed "*out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation,*" as a Royal Priesthood, offering before the Throne "golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the Saints"—prayers in which they intercede for the Church Militant, and offer for us on earth the prayers for our special needs which we ask them to offer.¹ "*We, being many, are one Body in Christ, and every one members one of another*" (1 Cor. xii. 25), and therefore the Communion of Saints involves the fact that the Saints in glory care for our welfare and pray for us. The Saints, as well as the Angels, rejoice over penitent sinners who have won victories over sin.

The "cloud of witnesses" in Heb. xii. 1. The Church Militant wages her warfare under the *view* of the Church Triumphant. "*Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, . . . and run with patience the race that is set before us*" (Heb. xii. 1).² It is perfectly true that the primary meaning of *μάρτυρες* seems to exclude, as the leading thought of this passage, the idea of the Church Militant running its race, in the arena of this world, with the Saints in glory as sympathising and interceding witnesses of its trials, from which they themselves have already emerged as victorious martyrs and confessors. But it is possible to lay too much

belief of the Church of the Old Testament (Origen *de Orat.* n. 11, t. i. p. 213 and *In Cant. Hom.* iii.).

¹ Thorndike says: "I must needs use the text in the Apocalypse (v. 8 and viii. 3) whereby it appeareth as much that the Church Triumphant prayeth for the Church Militant, as that the Saints of the Church Triumphant are alive" (*Works*, vol. iv. pt. 2, p. 764).

² The passage closes with bidding us "look to Jesus," the One Mediator, in Whom, and through Whom, the prayers of the Saints avail for us, and Who has willed that intercessory prayer shall be an abiding law of His Mediatorial Kingdom.

stress on an isolated point of scholarship.¹ So careful and accurate a scholar as Bishop Westcott says of this passage: "The writer regards himself and his fellow-Christians as placed in an arena, and contending for a great prize. The image of the amphitheatre with the rising rows of spectators seems to suggest the thought of an encircling cloud. The witnesses of whom the cloud is composed are unquestionably the countless heroes of faith whose deeds have been summarised in chap. xi. . . . There is apparently no evidence that *μάρτυς* is ever used simply in the sense of a spectator" . . . "*At the same time it is impossible to exclude the thought of the spectators in the amphitheatre.* The passage would not lose in vividness, though it would lose in power, if *θεατῶν* were substituted for *μαρτύρων*. These champions of old time occupy the place of spectators, but they are more than spectators. They are spectators who interpret to us the meaning of our struggle, and who bear testimony to the certainty of our success if we strive lawfully" (Westcott, *Ep. Hebrews*, p. 391).

The remarks of Bishop Westcott are conclusive on the point of scholarship and exegesis.² What this passage reveals with regard to the Saints in glory as the witnesses of our conflict, who have themselves passed through the same struggle for victory,

The passage involves indirectly the intercession of the Saints.

¹ Dr. Gibson goes so far as to dismiss the witness of this passage to the matter in hand on this ground *alone* (*Thirty-nine Articles*, p. 571). S. Ambrose, on the contrary, says that the Martyrs are "speculatores vitæ, actuumque nostrorum," "spectators of our life and actions" (*De Vid.* 55).

² Dr. Vaughan paraphrases the passage as follows: "These witnesses and martyrs of the past have not gone into nothingness. They still *are*, and are *for us*. We now fill the great arena, with a definite race to run; but they still surround us." He notes that *ἔχοντες περικείμενον ἡμῖν νέφος* involves the idea that the Saints "*are the possession of the living; περικείμενον ἡμῖν, lying closely around us*" (Vaughan, *Hebrews*, p. 253).

The idea of our Lord being with us "all the days" carries with it the nearness to us of those "lying closely around us," in the Communion

involves also indirectly the conclusion that they intercede for us, that we may be victors as they have been. The Western Church has never thought of the Saints of the Old Covenant with such a vivid interest as the Eastern Church has shown by placing their names in her Kalendar. But the balance cannot be redressed by applying this passage exclusively to the heroes of the Old Testament. It has a wider scope than its immediate reference to the Old Testament Saints of the preceding chapter of the epistle.

Dean Alford says (*in loc.*): “Νέφος, not only an immense multitude . . . pressing us all around, as the Dean Alford on Heb. xii. 1. spectators did the combatants at the circus, but also fitly compared to a cloud, from the fact of it being *above us*, they looking on from that heavenly bliss which they entered at Christ’s triumph. So that the words must be taken as distinctly so far implying community between the Church Triumphant and the Church below, that they who have entered into heavenly rest are conscious of what passes amongst ourselves. Any interpretation short of this leaves the exhortation here tame and without point.” Dean Alford is an original and independent witness, who never professed to be a Catholic theologian. He fearlessly stated what he believed to be the literal and grammatical sense of the New Testament, with a profound disregard for the usual interpretations of the Catholic or Dean Alford’s conclusion that the Saints in glory are conscious of what passes in the Church Militant. Protestant scholars of his day, and, as he gave but little weight to Catholic tradition, his witness is all the more valuable when he says that “they who have entered into heavenly rest are conscious of what passes amongst ourselves.” Although,

of Saints. Mr. Rendall’s Commentary on the Hebrews takes the same view: “The host of spirits of the faithful dead encompasses the arena, on which the champions of the Cross are contending for the Faith, like an overhanging cloud in Heaven” (p. 120).

as Bishop Forbes says, "it may almost seem superfluous" to cite passages from the Fathers to prove that they taught that the Saints do pray for us, it will be useful to quote some places when the words of Dean Alford have received some further consideration. It is necessary for us to remember that we are dealing with a very deep and mysterious subject, upon which theologians do not venture to dogmatise in detail.

Peter Lombard says: "But thqu mayest ask, Do the Saints hear the prayers of those who supplicate them, and do the desires of those who make requests of them come to their knowledge? It is not unworthy of belief that the souls of the Saints, which in their secret dwelling rejoice in the illumination of the true light of the face of God, do in the contemplation thereof understand the things which are done in this outer world, as much as pertaineth either to *them* for joy or to *us* for aid. For as to the Angels, so also to the Saints who stand before God, our petitions are made known in the Word of God which they contemplate."¹

This very cautious statement is exceeded in caution by that of Duns Scotus, who says that "it does not belong to the essence of blessedness that the Saints hear our prayers, though it is probable that God Himself reveals them to them."² The reason of this reserve

¹ "Sed forte quæris, Numquid preces supplicantium Sancti audiunt, et vota postulantium in eorum notitiam perveniunt? Non est incredibile animas Sanctorum, quæ in abscondito faciei Dei veri luminis illustratione letantur, in ipsius contemplatione ea quæ foris aguntur intelligere, quantum vel illis ad gaudium vel nobis ad auxilium pertinet. Sicut enim Angelis, ita et Sanctis qui Deo assistunt, petitiones nostræ innotescunt in Verbo Dei quod contemplantur" (P. Lomb. *Sent.* IV. d. xlv. 6).

² "Non esse ex ratione beatitudinis, qui beati audiant orationes nostras, probabile tamen est, quod Deus Ipse revelat" (Scotus, *Sent.* IV. d. xlv. 9, 4).

in treating the subject is that the Church has made no authoritative declaration concerning the *extent* of the Saints' knowledge of the warfare of the Church Militant, or concerning the *method* whereby that knowledge is imparted to them. The Church has always believed in the *fact* of their knowing "as much as pertaineth unto *them* for joy or to *us* for aid." This limitation of knowledge is in accordance with a reasonable theology. The Blessed Virgin and the Saints in glory know only what God vouchsafes in His Wisdom to reveal to them. They do not discern by their own intuition the secrets of the human heart. God alone searcheth the thoughts and motives of men. Unto Him alone are all hearts open, all desires known, and from Him alone no secrets are hid.

S. Thomas expresses the teaching of the Catholic Church with his usual clearness. He says of the Saints in glory : "But this is a part of their glory that they give aid in the way of salvation to those that stand in need of it ; for so they become workers with God, *than which nothing is more Divine*. Wherefore it is evident that the Saints have the knowledge of those things which are necessary for this purpose. And so it is manifest that they know, *in the Word*, the desires, the devotions, and the prayers of the persons who betake themselves to them for aid."¹

The explanation of the phrase "in Verbo" which Petavius gives is worth quoting. He says that "to see created things in the Word is the same thing as to see them in the work of God, or *in Dei claritate*, as Gregory

¹ "Hoc autem ad eorum gloriam pertinet quod auxilium indigentibus præstent ad salutem ; sic enim Dei cooperatores efficiuntur, *quo nihil est divinius*, ut ait Dionysius (*Cælest. Hier.* iii.). Unde patet quod sancti habent cognitionem eorum quæ ad hoc requiruntur. Et sic manifestum est quod in Verbo cognoscunt vota, et devotiones, et orationes hominum qui ad eorum auxilium confugiunt" (*Summa* III. Supp. Q. lxxii. A. 1).

calleth it (*Dial.* IV. c. xxxiii.);¹ or *in ipso fonte scientiæ*, as the same Gregory calleth it in another place (*Moral.* c. ii.); that is, to see *in Verbo facta per Verbum*, as Bernard saith. And all these are fitly comprehended by the theologians in the expression *Speculum*.² But the modern theology of the West does not go so far as S. Thomas in suggesting the method whereby the Saints obtain their knowledge of our needs.

Perrone. Perrone contents himself with saying: "But in what way the Saints may know of our prayers—whether in the Word, as some maintain, or again, by some special manifestation of God, as most prefer to hold, or in any possible way—it does not pertain to us to inquire. It is sufficient for our purpose that they *do* know them *certainly*."³

God reveals the condition of souls on earth to the Angels, or else they could not be our guardians and rejoice over our penitence. Our Lord says that the Saints are, *ισάγγελοι*. Therefore, without confusing the wonderful order of the Angels' ministry of service with the Saints' ministry of intercession, we can conclude that God reveals to the Saints, as well as to the Angels, "as much as pertaineth unto *them* for joy, or to *us* for aid."⁴ The Angel who offers the incense of the

The Angels
and Saints
know our
needs.

¹ S. Gregory also says: "Quæ intus omnipotentis Dei claritatem vident, nullo modo credendum est quia foris sit aliquid quod ignorent" (*Moralia*, xii. 26).

² Petavius *de Incarn.* lib. XIV. c. xvii. p. 8.

³ "Quomodo vero Sancti preces nostras cognoscant, an in Verbo, ut aliqui contendunt, an vero ex peculiari Dei manifestatione, ut plerique volunt, aut alia qualibet ratione, nostrum inquirere non est. Ad causam nostram sufficit, quod eas *certo* cognoscant" (Perrone, *de Cultu Sanct.* iii. 71).

⁴ Sir Thomas Browne, who says "there is no Church whose every part so squares with my conscience as the Church of England" (*Rel. Medici*, sec. v.), says in the same work: "They that, to refute the Invocation of Saints, have denied that they have any knowledge of our

Saints' prayers cannot be offering that of which he knows nothing, for "*the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the Saints, ascended up before God, out of the Angel's hand*" (Rev. viii. 4). In like manner the Saints who offer "the golden vials full of incense which are the prayers of the saints" (Rev. v. 8) are not offering prayers outside the scope of their knowledge. These Redeemed Ones, who sing the new song of redemption, cannot be conceived to be ignorant of the needs of those in the Church Militant for whom they offer the incense of their prayers.

The learned and fair-minded Protestant scholar Hugo Grotius. Grotius says that "the Protestants act unfairly who condemn for idolatry those who, in accordance with the opinion of many ancient writers, think that a certain knowledge of our necessities and prayers comes to the martyrs."¹ It appears plain from S. Paul's

affairs below, have proceeded too far, and must pardon my opinion till I can thoroughly answer that piece of Scripture, 'At the conversion of a sinner the Angels in Heaven rejoice'" (*Rel. Medici*, sec. xxxiii.). The Latin translation of the *Religio Medici* was published in 1644 at Paris. The passage in Latin is in a simpler form: "Ad eum quod spectat, qui relicit invocationem sanctorum, atque inficiatur ipsos, res quæ in terris geruntur, agnoscere eum quæso, ut mihi explicare velit textum hunc Evangelii, 'Gaudium erit coram angelis Dei super uno peccatore pœnitentiam agente.'" Sir Thomas Browne may not be reckoned a theologian, but his argument is a weighty one, and we may agree with Bellarmine's view of it: "Hoc argumentum adversarii nunquam solvere potuerunt" (*De Beat. et Canon Sanct.* l. I. c. xix.).

¹ "Itaque inique faciunt Protestantes, qui idolatriæ damnant eos, qui multorum veterum sententiam secuti, putant nostrarum necessitatum et precum notitiam aliquam ad martyres pervenire" (Grotius *ad Consultat. Cassandri*, tom. tr.).

Another Protestant writer holds the same view: "Quum igitur beatæ mentes multo magis nunc rebus nostris intersint, quam quando in terris vivebant, multoque omnia præsentius intueantur . . . quum caritas earum aut voluntas iuvandi longe sit ardentior, denique quum preces earum longe sunt efficaciores, quam quas olim fundebunt in hac vita,

words that he expected a vast increase in knowledge and intellectual power when he saw "*face to face*" after death in the Vision of God. "*Now I know in part,*" he says,

S. Paul on
knowledge
after death.

"*but then I shall know fully, even as I myself was fully known*" (ἐπιγνώσομαι καθὼς καὶ ἐπεγνώσθην) (1 Cor. xiii. 12). We have no

warrant for supposing that S. Paul meant to imply that this full knowledge would not be his when he was "with Christ" in the Church Triumphant. There is no hint in his language that he intended his words to apply only to the knowledge he would have, after the General Resurrection, in his perfect consummation and bliss, both of body and soul. It is therefore legitimate to apply S. Paul's words to the knowledge which the Saints of the Church Triumphant will possess, when they see "*face to face*" in the Vision of God, or "*in Verbo*" as S. Thomas thinks, either expression signifying the fact that God reveals to them the needs of the Church Militant.

S. Augustine appears to include the Church Expectant in the scope of the following remarks, and a certain knowledge of the Church Militant may well be attributed to these waiting souls, so that they can pray for us, as we pray for them. He says: "Therefore it must be admitted that the

S. Augustine
on the know-
ledge of the
Saints.

dead (*i.e.* of the Church Expectant) do not know what may be done here, but this ignorance

only extends to the time *when* it is being done; afterwards indeed they hear of it from those who by dying pass hence to them; not indeed all things, but only the things which they are permitted to declare, who on their part are permitted to call these things to their remembrance, and

constet autem, quantum Deus etiam et viventium intercessionibus tribuerit, et quam utiliter nos fratrum preces nostris coniungi expectamus, non video, quomodo crimini dare possit compellare felicem animam vel sanctum angelum, eiusque intercessionem vel auxilium postulare" (Leibnitz, *Syst. Theol.* p. 194).

which those to whom they declare them are permitted to hear. The dead too are able to hear something from the Angels, who are present at the things done here in earth, so far as He to Whom all things are subject may decide that each one of them ought to hear." This cautious language may befit the conditions of souls in the Church Expectant. His further words seem applicable to the Church Triumphant: "The spirits of the dead may also know certain things which are done here, not only what is past, or present, but things future also, which it is necessary for them to know by the revelation of the Spirit of God."¹

S. Gregory Nazianzen speaks plainly of the knowledge of the Saints in glory. "I am persuaded," he says, "that the souls of the Saints take cognisance of our affairs."² We may conclude with Dean Alford, "that they who have entered into Heavenly rest are conscious of what passes amongst ourselves," and that "any interpretation" (of the *νέφος μαρτύρων*) "short of this leaves the exhortation here tame and without point."

Having thus established the truth that the Saints know of our prayers by the revelation of God, we may proceed to show the universal consent of the Catholic Church to the fact that they are our Intercessors,³ and afterwards we

¹ "Proinde fatendum est nescire quidem mortuos quid hic agatur, sed dum hic agitur; postea vero audire ab eis qui hinc ad eos moriendo pergunt; non quidem omnia, sed quæ sinuntur indicare, qui sinuntur etiam ista meminisse; et quæ illos, quibus hæc indicant, oportet audire. Possunt et ab angelis, qui rebus quæ aguntur hic præsto sunt, audire aliquid mortui, quod unumquemque illorum audire debere iudicat Cui cuncta subiecta sunt. . . . Possunt etiam spiritus mortuorum aliqua quæ hic aguntur, quæ necessarium sit ea nosse, non solum præterita vel præsentia, verum etiam futura Spiritu Dei revelante cognoscere" (S. Aug. *de Cura pro Mort.* c. xv.).

² "Καὶ γὰρ περὶ τοὺς τῶν ἁγίων ψυχὰς τῶν ἡμετέρων ἀσθάνεσθαι" (S. Greg. Naz. *Theol. Epist.* 201).

³ The ante-Nicene evidence for the Intercession of the Saints is

can trace the theological reasonableness of our *asking* them to pray for us, from the two established facts that they *do* pray for us, and that they *can* hear us.

“S. Peter and S. Paul would not be the Apostles whose lives and writings we know,” says Canon Mason, “if they did not pray for the Church which was founded upon them. . . . Almost anything would be more tolerable than to suppose that we have no place in the loving intercessions of our fathers and brethren and friends who have passed before us to be with Christ. . . . We may well believe that the intercessions of the Saints were never so powerful as since their death. This belief does not rest only upon the consideration of the superiority of their state in itself, but rather upon their more complete sanctification, and their more unhindered access to God.”¹

The attempt of Vigilantius to deny that the Saints can pray for us called forth the indignant protest of S. Jerome. “You say in your book,” he says, “that whilst we are alive we can pray for each other; very plain. In the contemporary description of the Martyrdom of S. Ignatius his friends in a vision “saw the Blessed Ignatius praying for us . . . and standing before the Lord” (ἐπενυχόμενον ἡμῖν ἐωρῶμεν τὸν μακάριον Ἰγνάτιον . . . καὶ παρεστῶτα τῷ Κυρίῳ) (*Martyr. S. Ignatii*, c. vii.).

Origen says that “he thinks that all those Fathers who have fallen asleep before us fight on our side and aid us with their prayers” (“Ego sic arbitror, quod omnes illi qui dormierunt ante nos Patres pugnent nobiscum et adiuvent nos orationibus suis” (*In Iesu Nave*, Hom. XVI. c. xxi). We have already noted his application of the passages in Tobit and the Maccabees.

Eusebius (*Ecll. Hist.* vi. 5) relates how the Martyr Potamiena besought the Lord, after her martyrdom, for the soul of Basilides, who was converted by her constancy.

S. Cyprian, on the occasion of the plague at Carthage in A.D. 252, encourages his flock by telling them of the “*copiosa turba, iam de sua immortalitate secura et adhuc de nostra salute sollicita.*”

¹ Dr. Mason, *Purgatory and the State of the Faithful Departed*, etc., p. 160.

but that, when we are dead, the prayer of none of us will be heard on behalf of another. . . . If the Apostles and Martyrs, whilst still in the flesh, are able to pray for others when they still have reason to be anxious for their own safety, how much more can they not pray after their crowns, their victories, and their triumphs !”¹

The controversy occasioned by the opinions of Vigilantius has been already mentioned ; but it needs The heresy of Vigilantius. briefly summarising here because of its bearing upon the article “the Communion of Saints” in the Apostles’ Creed. He was a priest of the Diocese of Barcelona at the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century. Gennadius (*De Script. Eccl.* 35) says that he was “a Gaul by birth,” who was “led astray by the praise of men and presumed beyond his strength,” so that his books “must be placed in the catalogue of heretical writings. He was answered by the blessed priest Jerome.” He attacked the doctrine of the Intercession of the Saints, the veneration of the martyrs, the monastic vows, and the profession of celibacy for the cause of religion. He appears to have been a somewhat feeble forerunner of certain aspects of popular Protestantism.

¹ “Dicis in libello tuo, quod dum vivimus mutuo pro nobis orare possumus, postquam mortui fuerimus nullius sit pro alio exaudienda oratio ; præsertim cum martyres ultionem sui sanguinis impetrare non quiverint. Si Apostoli et Martyres adhuc in corpore constituti possunt orare pro cæteris, quando pro se adhuc debent esse solliciti, quanto magis post coronas, victorias, et triumphos ” (S. Jer. *adv. Vigilant.* p. 283).

We may strengthen S. Jerome’s argument by the thought of S. Stephen praying for those who stoned him to death, and especially for Saul, the young Pharisee who took the leading part in his martyrdom. We cannot conceive that S. Stephen ceased to pray for Saul’s conversion after the Lord Jesus had received his spirit. Nor can we believe otherwise than that the continuous intercession of S. Stephen was offered for S. Paul during the whole of his apostolic career, until he too joined the noble army of Martyrs before the Throne.

A German writer claims him as an exponent of "pure evangelical truth" (Zöckler, *Hieronimus*, p. 310), and Dr. Gilly takes the same view in his work, *Vigilantius and his Times* (1844). His opinions spread in Southern Gaul, and his denial of the Intercession and the consequent Invocation of the Saints appears to have caused the Church in Southern Gaul to insert the words "the Communion of Saints" into the Apostles' Creed. This clause first appears in a sermon by Faustus of Riez (A.D. 490), a Bishop of Southern Gaul, who applies it distinctly to the Vigilantian heresy.¹

Dr. Harnack appears to be justified in stating that the clause was inserted into the Gallican Creed to oppose the heresy of Vigilantius. "We shall have to consider it highly probable," he says, "that the words in question were actually taken to mean communion with the Martyrs and chosen Saints. Thus they were, to begin with, not an explanation of the expression 'the Holy Catholic Church,' but a continuation of it."² Dr. Swete holds, on the contrary, that the clause is "Anti-Donatist" rather than "Anti-Vigilantian,"³ and he quotes S. Augustine's use of the expression "Sanctorum communio" in the Donatist controversy as expressing the inner circle of holy souls known to God, whose communion in the visible Church is not impaired by the mingling of tares with the

¹ "Credamus et *sanctorum communionem*, sed sanctos non tam pro Dei parte (*not as though they shared in the prerogatives of God*), quam pro Deo honore veneremur . . . colamus in sanctis timorem et amorem Dei, non divinitatem Dei; colamus merita, non quæ de proprio habent, sed quæ accipere pro devotione meruerunt. Digne itaque venerandi sunt, dum nobis Dei cultum et futuræ vitæ desiderium contemptu mortis insinuant" (Faustus of Riez, ap. Caspari *Anecdota*, i. p. 338).

² See the Communion of Saints in Dr. Harnack's *Das Apostolische Glaubensbekenntniss*, Berlin, 1892.

³ Dr. Swete, *Apostles' Creed*, pp. 82-88.

wheat. The phrase did not appear in any Creed till after S. Augustine's death, and there is no direct evidence that its insertion in the Creed was due to the Donatist controversy. Dr. Swete also quotes in explanation of it the direction to the Priest in the Sarum Manual on the Communion of Saints. "*Ordo ad visitandum infirmum*" to say, "Dearest brother, dost thou believe . . . in the Communion of Saints—that is, that all men who live in charity are partakers of all the gifts of grace which are dispensed in the Church, and that all who are in fellowship with the just here in the life of grace are in fellowship with them in glory?"

This explanation, however, combines the Anti-Donatist and Anti-Vigilantian idea of the clause in a true harmony, and it seems clear from the evidence that the "Communion of Saints" was first added to the Creed as Dr. Harnack suggests,¹ and that the Augustinian view was subsequently read into it. The clause would be manifestly incomplete in its interpretation if it did not include (1) The Communion of the Saints with us in their intercessions on our behalf, for which we are permitted to ask them

¹ Dr. Harnack's quotation from Faustus seems conclusive: "Ut transeamus ad 'Sanctorum communionem.' Illos hic sententia ista confundit qui Sanctorum et amicorum Dei cineres non in honore debere esse blasphemant, qui beatorum martyrum gloriosam memoriam sacrorum reverentia monumentorum colendam esse non credunt. In symbolum prævaricati sunt et Christo in fonte mentiti sunt" (Ap. Caspar. p. 273). This plain and distinct language shows that this clause in the Creed was primarily directed against the heresy of Vigilantius, and Dr. Harnack obviously remarks that, in its Anti-Vigilantian sense, "it was necessary for the Churches of the Reformation to misinterpret it," just as in another place he tells us with approval that the Protestant "Churches" of Germany have substituted "Christian" for "Catholic" in their version of the Apostles' Creed. It clears the issue when these religious organisations of human origin give up of their own accord all claim to belong to the Catholic Church.

(a truth which Vigilantius denied), and further, our communion in prayer *with* and *for* the souls of the Church Expectant; and also (2) our communion in the Visible Church (in which are tares and wheat), which the Donatists denied.

S. Jerome's condemnation of Vigilantius has caused a necessary digression in our catena of patristic authorities. But it is as convenient here as in any other part of this book to show the true bearing of the clause "the Communion of Saints," and to establish the fact that the denial of their intercession and its logical consequences was regarded as a distinct heresy. S. Augustine's testimony

S. Augustine
on the Inter-
cession of the
Saints.

to the Intercession of the Martyrs has been cited in the previous chapter. We may note, however, his great care to show that the very

perfection which makes them our intercessors is not "*in se, sed in Illo cui capiti perfecta membra cohæserunt*" (*Serm.* cclxxxv. 5). The testimony of S. Ambrose, "*non*

S. Ambrose.

erubescamus eos intercessores nostræ infirmitatis

adhibere" (*De Viduis*, 55), has also already been cited with its threefold witness to the place of the Saints in the Church Triumphant, their Intercession, and our right to invoke their prayers. We may refer also to the quotations from

S. Gregory
Nazianzen and
S. Gregory of
Nyssa.

S. Gregory Nazianzen and S. Gregory of Nyssa in the previous chapter, which teach the Intercession and Invocation of the Saints in glory.

There is also the well-known episode of the reception of the

Witness of the
Fathers of
Chalcedon,
A.D. 451.

name of the martyred Flavian at the Council of Chalcedon. "Flavian lives after death," cried

the assembled Fathers, "the martyr will pray for us."¹ Proterius had also met with a violent death at the hands of Timothy Ailurus of Alexandria. The Bishops in their letter to the Emperor Leo, at the same Council

¹ "Φλαβιανὸς μετὰ θάνατον ζῇ· ὁ μάρτυς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν εὐξεται" (*Conc. Chalc. Act. xi.*).

said "Proterius had been admitted into the army of martyrs, and they prayed that God would regard his intercessions and show them mercy and favour."¹

The witness of the Liturgies testifies to the public expression of the Intercession of the Saints. The Syriac Liturgy of S. James is probably its earliest form, and in it we find: "Wherefore we commemorate them (*i.e.* the Saints) that while they stand before Thy Throne they may remember our weakness and infirmity, and offer to Thee, in union with us, this tremendous Sacrifice."² The Liturgy of S. Basil has: "Now, Lord, by command of Thine only begotten Son, we communicate with the memory of Thy Saints—and of the whole company of Thy Saints, by whose prayers and supplications do Thou have mercy upon us all."³ The Liturgy of S. Chrysostom has: "Making mention of our all-holy, blessed and glorious Lady, Mary Mother of God and Ever-Virgin, with all the Saints let us commend our selves and one another and all our life to God."⁴ We may add the testimony of the well-known words of the "Liberation" of the Western Liturgy: "and graciously grant, at the

¹ "Sanctissimum quidem Proterium in ordine et choro sanctorum martyrum ponimus, et eius intercessionibus misericordem et propitium Deum nobis fieri postulamus" (*Ep. Episc. Europ. apud Conc. Chalc. cap. xxvii.*).

² "Idcirco enim memoriam illorum agimus ut dum ipsi stabunt coram throno Tuo nostræ quoque tenuitatis et infirmitatis meminerint, tibi que nobiscum offerant sacrificium hoc tremendum" (Hammond, *Litt. p. 75*).

³ "Nunc, Domine, ex præcepto Filii Tui unigeniti communicamus memoriæ Sanctorum tuorum; . . . omnisque chori Sanctorum tuorum, quorum precibus et supplicationibus miserere nostrum omnium . . ." (Latin Trans. ap. Renaudot. i.).

⁴ "Τῆς παναγίας εὐλογημένης ἐν δόξῳ δεσποίνης Θεοτόκου καὶ ἀειπαρθένου Μαρίας μετὰ πάντων τῶν ἁγίων μνημονεύσαντες ἑαυτοὺς καὶ ἀλλήλους καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν ζωὴν ἡμῶν Χριστῷ τῷ Θεῷ παραθώμεθα" (Brightman, p. 363).

intercession of the Blessed and Glorious Mary, the Ever-Virgin Mother of God, together with Thy Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul and Andrew, and all the Saints, peace in our time," etc.¹

After reviewing the evidence, Dean Luckcock asks whether the doctrine of the Intercession of Saints is "to be accounted Catholic on Vincentian principles?"

Dean Luckcock
on the Inter-
cession of the
Saints.

There can be little hesitation in replying in the affirmative. A large number of Primitive Doctors, in diverse portions of the Church, amply sufficient at least to be regarded as fairly representative of the whole community, are shown to have expressed their opinion in support of it, and there is no trace of any countervailing or contradictory views."² In this particular Dr. Luckcock is following the theology of the Caroline Divines. Field,

Dean Field
quotes Bucer
on the same.

Dean of Gloucester (A.D. 1610), quotes with approval Bucer's words on the Collects of the Church which commemorate the intercessions and merits of the Saints: "Seeing in these prayers, whatsoever is attributed to the intercession and merits of the Saints, all that is asked, not of the Saints, but of our merciful God, through Jesus Christ; they that so pray, do thereby profess and testify that they acknowledge that these things which they ask of God, by the intercession and for the merits of the Saints, are the free gifts of God."³ James I. considered himself to be a theologian, and was

¹ "Libera nos, quæsumus, Domine, ab omnibus malis præteritis, præsentibus, et futuris; et intercedente beata et gloriosa semperque Virgine Dei genetrice Maria et beatis Apostolis tuis Petro, et Paulo, et Andrea, cum omnibus Sanctis, da propitius pacem in nostris diebus" etc. (*Sarum Canon*).

² Dean Luckcock, *After Death*, p. 228.

³ Field, *Of the Church*, App. book III. vol. ii. p. 101. The opinion of Bucer found an echo in the *Saxon Confession* of 1651. This Protestant document says: "There is no doubt that the Blessed pray for the Church" (*Saxon Confession*, 22).

drawn into controversy with Cardinals Bellarmine and Du Perron. He employed Bishop Andrewes to answer Cardinal Bellarmine, and the good Bishop's loyalty caused him to defend some of the King's statements at the expense of strict theological accuracy.¹ Isaac Casaubon, in

Isaac Casaubon replying for the King to Cardinal Du Perron, on the same. struck a truer note when he said : " His Majesty

venerates the Blessed Martyrs and the other Saints now reigning with Christ, Who is the Head both of the Triumphant and Militant Church, and he does not doubt but that they assiduously pray for the necessities of the Church, and firmly believes that their prayers are not useless." ²

Thorndike summarised the teaching of S. Augustine as follows: "S. Augustine supposeth that Thorndike on the Intercession of the Saints. Nebridius prayed for him, being dead (*Conf.* ix. 3); and expects benefit from S. Cyprian's prayers (*De Bapt.* v. 17). He said afore that we are to be commended by the prayers of the Martyrs. . . . And again (*Contra Faustum*, xx. 21) the reason why they celebrated the memories of the Saints, he assigns, that they *might be partners in their merits, and be helped by their prayers.*" Again he quotes S. Leo the Great,³ and S. Gregory the

¹ See Andrewes, *Respons. ad Bellarmin. passim.*

² *Reply of King James I.*, by Casaubon, p. 59 (edit. London. 1612). Isaac Casaubon was one of the most learned of the Protestants of Geneva, where he became Professor of Greek at the University. He was subsequently Professor at Montpellier, and became Librarian to King Henry IV. After the King's assassination he came to England at the invitation of James I., and shortly afterwards died, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. He was too learned in the Fathers to consent to the extravagances of the Protestantism in which he had been brought up.

³ "Qui [Dominus] est mirabilis in Sanctis suis, in quibus nobis et *præsidium* constituit et exemplum . . . Cuius [Laurentii] oratione et patrocinio adiuvari nos sine cessatione confidimus" (S. Leo Magnus, *Serm.* lxxxv.).

Great,¹ and his judgment on the whole matter is well summed up in the following passage: "Neither is it to be doubted that the Saints in happiness pray for the Church Militant, and that they have knowledge thereof" (*Works*, vol. iv. pt. 2, pp. 763-766).

As the direct intention of these pages is to promote union amongst Catholics, it may be helpful to quote here the words of a modern Roman theologian upon the relation of the Intercession and Invocation of the Saints to the Intercession of our Blessed Lord: "That the holy Angels and blessed in Heaven are associated with Jesus Christ—the one Mediator of God and Man, Who ever liveth to make intercession for us—in praying in our behalf, hearing, and offering our prayers to God . . . is abundantly clear. . . . In this intercession our Lord Jesus Christ holds a place of His own quite apart, and, by its nature, wholly distinct from that of all other mediators. He, as the Divine Incarnate Word, is alone Mediator by right of justice, and in this sense, according to the Apostle's words, *there is but one only Mediator the Man Christ Jesus*. He is moreover the Head of His mystical body, in and through Whom all His members live and have vital force to act. All other mediation whatsoever, whether of the blessed in Heaven, or of the just on earth, is not of justice, but of pure grace, and of availing efficacy only through Jesus Christ, and in union with His mediation. So far from detracting aught from the mediation of Jesus Christ, it redounds to the exceeding glory and praise thereof,

Livius on the
Intercession of
the Saints
depending on
our Lord's
Intercession.

¹ "Rogo omnipotentem Deum ut Sua te gratia protegat et beati Petri, apostolorum principis, intercessione a malis omnibus illæsum servet" (S. Greg. M. *Ep.* lii. *ad Secundin*).

This last passage is an instance of what has been termed "Comprecation," which is to ask God that the prayers of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Saints may avail for us. It is "oblique" Invocation, but it has little authority as compared with "direct" Invocation, although it is legitimate enough *per se*.

being in truth His own—the overflow of the superabounding fulness of His own all-availing intercession to the members of His mystical body, through the Communion of Saints.”¹ These words are in the best sense truly Evangelical, as voicing the essential spirit of the Gospel of Christ.

We have now arrived at the last stage of our inquiry, and shall proceed to examine the witness of the Catholic Church

to the practice of the Invocation of the Saints. The Invocation of the Saints. We cannot prove from Holy Writ that it is necessary to our salvation to ask for the prayers of the Saints in the Church Militant. Neither can we prove that it is more than *bonum et utile*, as the Council of Trent says, to ask for the prayers of the Saints in glory. Both of

these kindred practices of devotion stand on the same ground. Our religion would become cold and self-centred if we never prayed for others, and if we never, with S. Paul, said, Mutual duty of praying for others, and asking for their prayers.

“Brethren, pray for us.” In like manner, if we never asked the Blessed Virgin and the Saints in glory to pray for us, our devotions would be robbed of a richness and fervour which is To ask for the prayers of the Saints enriches devotion.

naturally enkindled by the thought of “the golden vials full of odours which are the prayers of the Saints,” offered

for us. We cannot believe that we are well pleasing to our Lord when we sever ourselves from communion with His Mother² and His friends, the truly human setting in which he willed to It does not obscure our Lord's Intercession.

¹ *The Blessed Virgin in the Fathers of the first Six Centuries* (with a preface by Cardinal Vaughan), by T. Livius, M.A., pp. 278-282). The *imprimatur* of the late Cardinal Vaughan, together with the preface he wrote for this book, gives it the character of being an official presentment of modern Roman theology.

² We may mention here the vision of S. Gregory Thaumaturgus in A.D. 234. It is related by S. Gregory of Nyssa, and its purport is that S. John and the Blessed Virgin appeared to him when he was perplexed by heresies which he did not know how to answer. The Blessed

place Himself, by not asking for their intercessions, from a fear lest we should forget that they avail only through

The reason why Invocation is not directly mentioned in the New Testament. Him, the One Mediator and Intercessor. It is true that there is no direct mention of the Invocation of Saints in the New Testament. But since most of it was written whilst the

The Invocation of the Saints in glory is the logical outcome of our asking for the prayers of the living. Blessed Virgin and the majority of the Apostles were still living on earth, and since the practice of asking for the prayers of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints grew up gradually, from the belief in their intercession, and from the analogy of asking for the intercessions of those still

militant here on earth, it would be *prima facie* unreasonable to expect to find more in the New Testament than the general principle that we should ask for the prayers of our fellow-members in the Body of Christ. The Church

The practice of invoking the prayers of the living carried with it subsequently the practice of invoking the Saints in glory. Militant had, first of all, to learn the Pauline lesson that we are "members one of another" (Eph. iv. 25) in the Communion of Saints on earth. And, afterwards, when the Blessed Virgin, the Apostles, and the early Martyrs passed into the Church Triumphant, it was able to realise its communion with "the cloud of witnesses,"

Virgin in his vision bade S. John disclose to him the form of a Creed, which he subsequently committed to writing. Bishop Bull, after quoting it in his work on the Nicene Faith, alludes to this history of its origin, and adds: "*No one should think it incredible that such a providence should befall a man whose whole life was conspicuous for revelations and miracles, as all ecclesiastical writers who have mentioned him witness with one voice*" (Newman's *Letter to Pusey*, p. 81). Bishop Bull was of a cold intellectual spirit, and by no means the sort of man to give undue credence to such a manifestation of the Communion of Saints as the vision of S. Gregory. This representation of the Blessed Virgin, as aiding a holy Bishop to combat heresy, is a vivid realisation of her communion with the faithful, and is most probable evidence that he had been asking for her prayers before the Throne, that his spiritual difficulties might be removed.

and with "the spirits of just men made perfect." Thus it passed naturally into the practice of asking for their prayers, just as it had previously realised that its members should say, "Brethren, pray for us" in the Communion of Saints on earth. It must be remembered also that the evidence of the New Testament is not direct and positive

The analogy
of Infant
Baptism in
the New
Testament.

on such a matter as the Baptism of Infants.

We accept in this matter the judgment and practice of the Church, and by that judgment we regard the Antipædobaptists as heretics.

Without pressing the analogy too closely, we may view the silence of the New Testament on the Invocation

The New
Testament lays
down general
principles
which the
Church applies
in practice.

of Saints from a similar standpoint. The New Testament laid down certain general principles upon the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. The

Church has by its practice rightly applied those principles to the Baptism of Infants. In like manner the New Testament has laid down the general principle that we should ask for the intercessions of the members of Christ's Body, the Catholic Church. There is not a word or a hint in the New Testament that this asking for others to pray for us is *restricted* in any way, or that we have not as much right to ask for the prayers of Christ's members in glory, as we have to ask for the prayers of those still in the Church Militant.

The Church has applied the general principle of asking for intercessions, which the New Testament has laid down, to its practice in asking for the prayers of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints in glory. And the evidence from the

The general
principle
which is
applied to the
practice of
Invocation.

Fathers shows that the Church adopted this practice gradually. Our first distinct witness is Origen (A.D. 225) who says that "intercession and thanksgiving may be offered not only to

saints, but to men" (evidently meaning thanksgiving for the faithful departed and mutual intercession in the Church

Militant), "but supplication *only* to Saints, as for instance to some Peter or Paul that they may aid us," etc.¹ Dean Luckcock's argument has forced him to interpret this passage

of *living* saints,² but Dr. Bigg, who interprets Ante-Nicene evidence on the Invocation of Saints. Origen with impartiality, says that "Origen no doubt regarded this kind of prayer as lawfully

offered to Saints, whether on earth or Heaven."³ The instance of the vision of S. Gregory Thaumaturgus may be regarded as an indirect proof of

invocation, for the vision of the Blessed Virgin and S. John, as has been already suggested, may have been an answer to

his prayers. In the passage which heads this chapter S. Gregory Nazianzen (A.D. 372) believed that the Virgin Justina, in the first half of the third century, "fled for refuge to God," and at the same time besought "the Virgin Mary to aid a virgin in peril."⁴ He

¹ "Δέησιν μὲν οὖν καὶ ἔντευξιν καὶ εὐχαριστίαν οὐκ ἄτοπον καὶ ἁγίοις προσεγγεῖν, ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν δύο, λέγω δὲ ἔντευξιν καὶ εὐχαριστίαν, οὐ μόνον ἁγίοις, ἀλλὰ δὴ καὶ ἀνθρώποις· τὴν δὲ δέησιν μόνον ἁγίοις, εἴ τις εὕρηθελι Παῦλος ἢ Πέτρος ἵνα ὠφελήσωσιν ἡμᾶς ἀξίους ποιοῦντες τοῦ τυχεῖν τῆς δεδομένης αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίας πρὸς τὰ ἁμαρτήματα ἀφίεναι" (Origen *de Oratione*, 14).

² Dr. Luckcock, *After Death*, pp. 187-8.

³ Dr. Bigg, *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, p. 185.

⁴ S. Greg. Naz. *Orat.* xxiv. 10, 11. Bishop W. Forbes (A.D. 1634) refutes the view that the act of Justina was an anticipation of the Collyridian heresy. He says "it was merely the religious adoration of the Blessed Virgin by prayer, properly so called, and by oblations (*i.e. Latria*) that S. Epiphanius sharply reproves in the Collyridians: but neither he, nor any other of the Fathers find fault with the bare addressing of her, that by her prayers she would help us before the Lord" (*Cons. Mod.* vol. ii. p. 241). We may add to this valuable Anglican testimony to the Invocation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the further consideration that the genuineness of the "Acts of Justina" does not affect the value of S. Gregory's witness to the fact, that he considered the Invocation of the Blessed Virgin Mary as usual a part of the devotional life of the third century as it was in his own day. He looks upon Justina's invocation as quite natural under the circumstances.

evidently considered that Christians could flee for refuge to God, and at the same time lawfully ask for the aid and prayers of the Blessed Virgin. The Invocation of the Blessed Virgin by Justina was the natural corollary of her fleeing to God for refuge. It was its supplement, and *not* its substitute. S. Gregory shows this by his own practice. He addresses S. Cyprian, who had been martyred about a hundred years before, as follows: "Do thou look down upon us propitiously from above and direct our speech and life, and be a shepherd, or co-shepherd, of this sacred flock . . . bestowing on us a more perfect and brighter illumination of the Holy Trinity, in Whose presence thou standest, to Whom we give worship and glory."¹ His invocation of S. Cyprian did not prevent his giving worship and glory to the Blessed Trinity. He also invokes his friend S. Basil the Great, who had died during his lifetime, as follows: "Do thou, O holy and sacred one, look down upon us from above and by Thy intercessions stay the thorn in our flesh given us from God—our discipline, or enable us to bear it bravely, and direct our whole life for us for the best."² S. Gregory elsewhere speaks of prayer for direct aid being

¹ "Σὺ δὲ ἡμεῖς ἐποπτεύεις ἄνωθεν ἵλεως, καὶ τὸν ἡμέτερον διεξάγεις λόγον καὶ βίον καὶ τὸ ἱερὸν τοῦτο ποίμνιον ποιμαίνεις ἢ συμποιμαίνεις . . . τὴν τῆς ἁγίας Τριάδος ἔλλαμψιν, ἧς σὺ νῦν παραστάτης, τελωτέραν τε καὶ λαμπροτέραν ἡμῖν χαρίζόμενος, ἣν προσκυνούμεν, ἣν δοξάζομεν" (S. Greg. Naz. Or. xxiv. 19).

We must interpret all these invocations in the spirit of the words of S. Thomas, "Nos non porrigere Sanctis preces nostras quasi per ipsos implendos, solius enim Dei est gratiam et gloriam dare; sed quasi per ipsos sua intercessione impetrandas" (*Summa* II. 2^{dæ}, Q. lxxxiii. A. 4). Bishop W. Forbes quotes this passage as the key to the true teaching on Invocation (*Cons. Mod.* ii. p. 304).

² "Σὺ δὲ ἡμᾶς ἐποπτεύεις ἄνωθεν, ᾧ θεῖα καὶ ἱερὰ κεφαλὴ, καὶ τὸν δεδομένον ἡμῖν παρὰ Θεοῦ σκόλοπα τῆς σαρκός, τὴν ἡμετέραν παιδαγωγίαν, ἣ στήσῃς ταῖς σεαυτοῦ πρεσβείαις ἢ πέλσῃς καρτερῶς φέρειν καὶ τὸν πάντα βίον ἡμῖν διεξάγεις πρὸς τὸ λυσιτελέστατον" (S. Greg. Naz. Orat. xliiii. 82).

addressed alone to God. By this statement we must interpret his words invoking S. Cyprian "to direct our speech and life" and S. Basil "to direct our whole life for the best." He means "pray for us to God that He may direct us." This explanation is necessary to be given here, because we shall find similar invocations addressed to the Blessed Virgin, and all of them must be explained in the same manner. The fervour of devotion is not always confined to the strict and literal limits of theological accuracy.¹ S. Gregory of Nyssa (A.D. 380) is more accurate in his invocation of the martyr S. Theodore: "Ask for peace . . . that the mad and lawless barbarian may not rage against our temples and altars; that the profane may not trample holy things under foot."² His invocation of S. Ephraem "standing by the Divine Altar" of Heaven has already been quoted. S. Chrysostom's words are plain and indisputable: "Let us flee to the intercession of the Saints, and let us beseech them to pray for us."³ He mentions the Emperor in his purple, going to the tombs of S. Peter and

¹ Bellarmine says: "Est tamen notandum quoniam dicimus non debere peti a Sanctis nisi *ut orant pro nobis* nos non agere de *verbis*, sed de *sensu* verborum, nam quantum ad verba licet dicere: S. Petre, miserere mei, salva me, aperi mihi aditum cœli; item, Da mihi sanitatem corporis, da patientiam, da mihi fortitudinem, etc., dummodo intelligamus salva me, et miserere mei *orando pro me*, da mihi hoc et illud tuis precibus et meritis" (*De Sanct. Beat.* i. 17). But it must be remembered that the fervid expression of devotion, used by Saints who were theologians, can form no guide for popular devotions intended for ordinary people. These must be framed and expressed in strict accordance with theological accuracy, which is always implied, but not always expressed, in the devotions of theologians.

² "Αἰτησον εἰρήνην . . . ἵνα μὴ κωμάσῃ κατὰ ναῶν καὶ θυσιαστηρίων λυσσῶν καὶ ἀθεσμος βάρβαρος, ἵνα μὴ πατήσῃ τὰ ἅγια βέβηλος" (S. Greg. Nyss. *de S. Theo. M.* t. iii. p. 585).

³ These words of S. Chrysostom are quoted in the heading of this chapter.

S. Paul at Rome, who "laying aside his pride stands entreating the Saints to be his advocate with God, and he who has the diadem begs the Tent-maker and the Fisherman, even now that they are dead, to be his advocates with God."¹ S. Ephraem invokes the Martyrs:

S. Ephraem with God."¹ S. Ephraem invokes the Martyrs :
Syrus. "Ye Martyrs who have won the victory . . . ye holy ones, intercede for us who are vain and sinners and full of sloth, that the grace of Christ may come upon us."² He invokes S. Basil : "Intercede for me who am most miserable, and call me back again by thy intercessions."

We close our testimony from the Eastern Doctors and Fathers with that of S. Basil (A.D. 370), the greatest of the three Cappadocians, who predeceased his brother S. Gregory of Nyssa, and his friend S. Gregory Nazianzus. It is the most theological of all the passages yet cited. He says : "I accept (as intercessors) the holy Apostles, Prophets and Martyrs, and I call upon them for their intercession to God that by them, that is by their mediation, the good God may be propitious to me and that I be granted redemption for mine offences."³

There is no reasonable doubt that the miracles wrought at the tombs of the martyrs, and by the relics of the Saints in such well-authenticated instances as S. Augustine recounts, had a powerful influence in promoting the practice of invoking the Saints.

The effect of
miracles on the
practice of
Invocation.

¹ "Καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸς ὁ τὴν ἀλουργίδα περικείμενος ἀπέρχεται τὰ σήματα ἐκεῖνα περιπτυζόμενος, καὶ τὸν τῦφον ἀποθέμενος ἔστηκε δεόμενος τῶν ἁγίων ὥστε αὐτοῦ προστῆναι παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ καὶ τοῦ σκηνοποιοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἀλιέως προστατῶν καὶ τετελευτηκότων δεῖται ὁ τὸ διάδημα ἔχων" (S. Chrys. *in Ep. II. ad Cor.*, *Hom.* xxvi. 5).

² "Ἀθλοφόροι μάρτυρες . . . πρεσβεύσατε ἅγιοι ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν τῶν χαύνων καὶ ἁμαρτωλῶν καὶ μεστῶν βαθυμίας ἵνα ἔλθῃ ἐφ' ἡμᾶς ἡ χάρις τοῦ Χριστοῦ" (S. Eph. Syr. *Enc. in Mart.*, *Op. Græca*, t. iii. p. 251).

³ "Δέχομαι δὲ καὶ τοὺς ἁγίους ἀποστόλους, προφῆτας, καὶ μάρτυρας καὶ εἰς τὴν πρὸς Θεὸν ἵκεσίαν τούτους ἐπικαλοῦμαι, τοῦ δι' αὐτῶν, ἥγουν διὰ τῆς μεσιτείας αὐτῶν, ἵλεῶν μοι γενέσθαι τὸν φιλόανθρωπον Θεόν, καὶ λύτρον μοι τῶν πταισμάτων γενέσθαι καὶ δοθῆναι" (S. Basil. *Ep.* ccclx.).

We cannot accuse a man of S. Augustine's intellect and powers of observation of superstition and credulity, or believe that S. Ambrose, who had been well versed in affairs in such a responsible position as Consular Governor of North Italy, would have lent his authority, as Bishop, to false miracles.¹ If the practice of invoking the Saints and Martyrs had been displeasing to God, He would not have answered these prayers by miracles.²

We may here briefly allude to the honour due to the relics of the Saints. There was a "doctrina Roman-
The relics of the Saints and sacred images. ensium" on the relics of the Saints which caused gross superstition, as it did in the parallel case of sacred images. Our Article XXII. rightly forbade both abuses, and is herein in agreement with the Council of Trent: "*Omnis porro superstitio in Sanctorum invocatione, Reliquiarum veneratione, et imaginum sacro usu tollatur*" (Sess. xxv.

¹ We have already alluded to the miracles wrought by the relics of S. Gervasius and S. Protasius at Milan, which are attested jointly by S. Ambrose and S. Augustine. The following shrewd comment of Sir Thomas Browne gives us the view of a layman of the Caroline period: "That miracles have ceased I can neither prove, nor absolutely deny, much less define the time and period of their cessation. That they survived Christ is manifest upon the Record of Scripture, that they outlived the Apostles also, and were revived at the Conversion of Nations many years afterwards, we cannot deny, if we shall not question those writers whose testimonies we do not controvert in points that make for our own opinions" (*Religio Medici*, p. 46). People are ready enough to quote S. Augustine and S. Ambrose to prove and fortify their own opinions; but when it comes to accepting their authority for miracles which they observed themselves, modern criticism declines to accept their evidence.

² Bishop Forbes of Brechin, after giving instances of patristic authority for the Invocation of Saints, says: "But a far stronger impulse than the advice given by these revered Fathers, or their practice, lay in *the facts of those days*. For apparently (and in the face of the evidence we cannot contradict it) it was God Who encouraged it by the answers to prayer so addressed" (*Thirty-nine Articles*, p. 410).

De Invocatione).¹ We have already touched on the Iconoclastic controversy in dealing with the Seventh Œcumenical Council, which defined the right use of sacred images and pictures. S. Augustine's testimony on Invocation is bound up with his veneration for the tombs of the Martyrs. He says: "When the mind calls up where the body of the loved one is buried, and the place (*i.e.* of burial) known by the name of the venerable Martyr suggests itself, the love of him (*i.e.* the survivor) who remembers and prays commends the loved soul to the same Martyr."² His idea is that the burial of our dead near the tomb of a Martyr causes the survivors to invoke the prayers of that Martyr for the dead who are buried near his resting-place. S. Augustine is, however, most careful to keep the Invocation of Saints within its due limits. We do not build temples to our Martyrs as to gods, but "Memorials" as to dead men whose spirits live with God; nor do we raise altars there that we may sacrifice to Martyrs, but to Him alone Who is the God of the Martyrs as well as of us. He is here alluding to the Holy Sacrifice, which is offered to God the Father alone, through our Lord Jesus Christ. The Western Service Books most jealously

¹ Bishop Forbes says of the relics of the Saints: "They who see nothing incredible in the mantle of Elias dividing Jordan, in the bones of Elisha restoring a man to life, in the handkerchiefs and aprons which had touched S. Paul healing disease and casting out evil spirits, will see no antecedent improbability in some of the effects which well-authenticated Church history alleges to have been wrought by God, in connection with the remains of some of His most distinguished servants. . . . Eminent Fathers believed that prayers were answered near the bodies of the martyrs, and that the touch of their relics dispelled disease. The evidence is irresistible" (*Ibid.* pp. 372-375). These pages give patristic references for the Bishop's statements.

² "Quum itaque recolit animus ubi sepultum sit carissimi corpus et occurrit locus nomine martyris venerabilis, eidem martyri animam dilectam commendat recordantis et precantis affectus" (S. Aug. *de cura ger. pro mort. c. vi.*).

guard this principle.¹ Cardinal Newman observes that, “as to the Latin Missal, Ritual, and Breviary, (i) Saints are not directly addressed in these books ; and (ii) prayers end with the Name of Jesus. . . . When in occasional Collects the intercession of the Blessed Mary is introduced, it does not supersede mention of our Lord as the Intercessor. Thus, in the Post-Communion on the Feast of the Circumcision, *May this Communion, O Lord, purify us from guilt, and at the intercession of Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, make us partakers of the heavenly remedy, through the same Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.*” (Newman, *Letter to Pusey*, p. 147).²

We have already quoted the testimony S. Ambrose, which distinctly enjoins the Invocation of the Saints.

¹ “Nos autem martyribus nostris non templa sicut diis, sed Memorias sicut hominibus mortuis, quorum apud Deum vivant spiritus, fabricamus ; nec ibi erigimus Altaria in quibus sacrificemus martyribus, sed uni Deo et martyrum et nostro” (S. Aug. *de Civitate Dei*, XXII. c. viii.).

² Cardinal Newman observes that the Eastern formularies of worship are “far less observant of dogmatic exactness.” He quotes from the *Euchologium*, p. 92. “*Help, save, pity, and preserve us, O God, through her, the All-Holy, Immaculate, most blessed and glorious Virgin*” ; and again, “*Hail, Virgin, True Queen, hail, glory of our race, thou hast borne Emmanuel. We beseech thee remember us, O faithful Advocate, in the sight of our Lord Jesus Christ, that He put away from us our sins*” (*Alexandrian Rite*, Assemani, t. vii.).

A full catena is found in the *Letter to Pusey*, pp. 148-155. The cause of this fuller and more untheological devotion in the Eastern Church is twofold : (i) The Eastern mind had a strong hold upon the central verities of Catholic Christology, and did not feel the need of the liturgical exactitude of the West ; (ii) the natural difference of temperament between the Oriental and Western minds led the Easterns to adopt devotional language of greater fervour than that of the Latin Liturgy, of which Dr. Rock has observed that “throughout the Missal and the Breviary there is not one single prayer, or collect, addressed to any Saint whatever, but every one of them is directed to God alone” (*Hierurgia*, vol. i. 342),

S. Jerome invokes Paula, and says : "Farewell, O Paula,
 S. Ambrose. and do thou help with thy prayers the old age
 S. Jerome. of thy supplicant even to its end. Thy faith
 and thy work join thee to Christ ; being in
 His presence, thou wilt more easily obtain that which thou
 dost ask." ¹

Without further multiplying of citations we can endorse
 Dean Luckock. the unwilling witness of Dean Luckcock, who
 whilst minimising, perhaps unconsciously, the
 evidence of the Fathers on Invocation yet feels bound to
 say that "the testimony of S. Basil, S. Gregory Nyssa,
 S. Ephraem, and S. Augustine remains so far unshaken." ²
 The testimony of the Roman Catacombs has also to be
 admitted. Dean Luckock says that here "we are met
 with clear and unmistakable proof that those who made the
 inscriptions considered it lawful to ask the prayers of their
 departed friends." ³ Canon Mason, who is more
 Canon Mason. vehemently opposed to the Invocation of Saints
 than Dean Luckock, has already been quoted as admitting
 the *Intercession* of the Saints, and we find him further
 forced to admit that "the practice of the Invocation of the
 Saints has probably as much to be said for it as any other
 corruption which has invaded Christianity. In view of its

¹ "Vale, o Paula, et cultoris tui ultimam senectutem orationibus
 iuva. Fides et opera tua Christo te sociant, præsens facilius quod
 postulas impetrabis" (S. Jerome, *Ep.* cviii. 33).

² *After Death*, p. 197.

³ *Ibid.* p. 199. In the Catacomb of SS. Nereus and Achilles the
 following two inscriptions clearly teach invocation : (i) "Augenda,
 mayest thou live in the Lord and do thou pray for us" ; (ii) "Mayest
 thou live in peace, and do thou pray for us." In the Catacomb of
 S. Callixtus is the following inscription : "Vincentia in Christ, mayest
 thou pray for Phœbe and her husband." In the Catacomb of Præ-
 textatus we find : "Ye Martyrs, Januarius, Agapetus, Felicissimus,
 refresh my soul." S. Januarius was martyred under Diocletian, at
 the beginning of the fourth century, but the other inscriptions may
 well be of an earlier date.

antiquity and of its wide diffusion, it cannot be summarily and impatiently dealt with by a Church which appeals to Catholic tradition.”¹ This passage is a singular instance of a foregone hostile conclusion tenaciously held in the face of facts and evidence.

In dealing with the Invocation of the Saints *in genere*, we naturally realise the primary importance of asking for the Intercessions of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The position which she occupies in the economy of Redemption, as the Second Eve and the Θεοτόκος, causes us to remember that on the last occasion in which she is mentioned in the New Testament she is described as continuing “in one accord in prayer and supplication” with the Apostles (Acts i. 14). The one weapon of the Second Eve is prayer and supplication for the triumph of redeemed humanity in the Body of Christ, and, as we may surely believe, for individual members of that Body. S. Irenæus calls the Virgin Mary “the Advocate of the Virgin Eve,”² and the idea of that

¹ Mason, *Purgatory*, etc., p. 164. Canon Mason has a habit of treating Catholic doctrines in which he does not believe as “corruptions of Christianity.” He attempts to trace the statement of the Catholic doctrine of Confirmation, which S. Thomas Aquinas based on the common consent of Christendom, to the *False Decretals*; and he substitutes for it his own view that Holy Baptism is “an unfinished fragment,” and his further statement that “a baptized but unconfirmed believer may be truly said not to have received the Holy Ghost.” Theological originality of this type removes Canon Mason from the category of persons whose opinions demand serious consideration, and his statement that the Invocation of Saints is a *corruption* is of no more value than his statement about Holy Baptism (Mason, *The Relation of Confirmation to Baptism*, pp. 414, 415).

² “Et si ea irobedierat Deo; sed hæc suasa est obedire Deo, uti Virginis Evæ Virgo Maria fuerit advocata” (S. Iren. *contr. Hæc.* v. 19). It must not be forgotten in estimating the testimony of the Fathers to invoking the Intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Saints, that until the Macedonian heresy had been checked, we find few examples of direct and separate prayer to the Holy Spirit.

special restoration of women to the place they had forfeited through Eve's transgression, by the advocacy of the Blessed Virgin, to which Bishop Forbes alludes,¹ is

beautifully set forth by S. Fulgentius (A.D. 500): S. Fulgentius. "Come ye virgins to a Virgin . . . mothers to a Mother . . . young maidens to the young Maiden. It is for this reason that the Virgin Mary has taken on her, in our Lord Jesus Christ, all these divisions of nature, that to all women who may have recourse to her she may be a succour, and so restore the whole race of women who come to her, being the new Eve (in her preservation of her virginity), as the new Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ, recovers the whole race of men."² We may note in this passage that the office of the Blessed Virgin is "taken on her in the Lord Jesus Christ," so that He is the true Redeemer of the whole human race—of men and women alike—and that the words of S. Fulgentius find their true parallel in S. Paul's "she shall be saved through the Child-bearing" (1 Tim. ii. 15), which implies that the Blessed Virgin, as Θεοτόκος, was the instrument whereby women were raised from their inferiority under the Old Covenant, to a spiritual and moral equality with men under the New Covenant, as "heirs together of the grace of life" (1 Pet. iii. 7).³ The

¹ We have already quoted his words, "What does not *woman* owe to the sublime and tender conception of Mary," etc. (Chap. II. p.).

² "Venite virgines ad Virginem . . . venite matres ad Matrem . . . venite iuenculæ ad Iuenculam. Ideo omnes istos cursus naturæ Virgo Maria in Domino nostro Iesu Christo suscepit, ut omnibus ad se confugientibus fæminis subveniret, et sic restauret omne genus fæminarum ad se advenientium nova Eva servando virginitatem, sicut omne genus virorum Adam novus recuperat Dominus Iesus Christus" (S. Fulgentius, *Sermo* iii.).

³ It took some considerable time before the true position of women under the New Covenant was realised in Christian practice. S. Monica's advice to wives to consider that their marriage indentures were "*Tanquam instrumenta quibus ancillæ factæ essent . . . proinde memores conditionis superbire adversus dominos non oportere*"

witness of S. Fulgentius is unequivocal and distinct with regard to the invocation of the Intercession of the Blessed Virgin.

S. Ephraem's apostrophe to the Martyrs, after commemorating the Apostles and other Saints, crowns S. Ephraem. his commemoration by adding: "And Mary, the Mother of Christ, who brought forth the Immaculate Fruit. May our souls be preserved from ills by her prayers! Thanks be to the Hidden Father, Who sent His Word to the Virgin, and formed in her a Body pure by the Living and Holy Spirit."¹ In another passage S. Ephraem uses the following "oblique" invocation. He asks God to have pity on him, "by the prayers and merits of the most holy ever-Virgin Mother of God, of all the Heavenly Host, and the whole company of Angels, Cherubim and Seraphim, Prophets and Apostles, Martyrs and Confessors."² He also attributes the conversion of the penitent robber at the Cross to the prayers offered for him by the *Mater dolorosa*.³ A homily, found amongst the

(S. Aug. *Conf.* IX. c. ix) goes far beyond the Christian marriage vow of obedience. The idea of the wife as an "ancilla" rather than a "help-meet" is quite Oriental, and in consonance with the inferior state of women under the Old Covenant. The ideas of S. Monica in the fourth century differed widely from the subsequent exaltation of woman in the age of chivalry. The gradual growth of Invocation as regards the Blessed Virgin Mary appears to be due to the difficulty, inherent in the Oriental mind, of realising that a woman was set next to our Lord in His Kingdom. This seems the true explanation of the strange language of S. Chrysostom on the Blessed Virgin Mary, on which we have already commented. But when the whole Church realised the exalted position of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the economy of Redemption, the recovery of that position which woman had lost in the first Eve became possible through the second Eve.

¹ *Sedra de Iustis*, *Serm.* iv. ; also *Opp. Syr.* t. iii. 481.

² S. Eph. *Threni Beatæ Virginis Mariæ*, *Opp. Græc. et Lat.* t. iii. p. 575.

³ S. Eph. *Opp. Syr.* vol. iii. p. 572.

works of S. Chrysostom, but written probably in the sixth century, says: "We have the Holy Virgin and Mother of God interceding for us. . . . Still we have need of the Apostles. Let us say to Paul, as they said of old, '*Come over into Macedonia and help us.*' Let us beseech Mary the holy and glorious Virgin and Mother of God, let us beseech the holy and glorious Apostles, let us beseech the holy Martyrs."¹ We have here an instance of "direct" invocation, and we may conclude with the previously quoted assertion of that first of Anglican peacemakers,² Bishop William Forbes, that none "of the Fathers find fault with the bare addressing of her" (the Blessed Virgin) "that by her prayers she may help us before the Lord."

This closing chapter may be fitly regarded as an extended commentary upon the Introduction of this book. It may once more be repeated that it is easy enough to accentuate differences between Catholics. Controversial asperities slip with facility from our pens, and acute special pleading on the part of theologians, whether Roman, Eastern, or Anglican, can find hundreds of reasons for perpetuating our unhappy divisions. What has been, imperfectly enough, attempted in these pages is to show that

Homily attributed to S. Chrysostom.

Words for peace.

¹ *De uno Legislatore* (inter opp. S. Chrysost.).

² Bishop W. Forbes closes his treatise *De Invocatione Sanctorum*, etc., as follows: "Let God alone be religiously adored" (*i.e.* with *Latria*); "let Him alone be prayed to through Christ, Who, truly and properly speaking, is the sole and only Mediator between God and man. Let not that most ancient custom, common in the Universal Church, as well Greek as Latin, of addressing Angels and Saints in the way we have said" (*i.e.* according to the limits laid down by S. Thomas, as cited previously) "be condemned or rejected as impious, or as vain and foolish. Let foul abuses and superstitions be taken away, and so shall peace hereafter be easily formed and ratified between the parties. Which may the God of peace, and of all holy concord, vouchsafe to grant for the sake of His only begotten Son" (*Cons. Mod.* ii. 313).

union between Catholics is possible, even upon subjects fraught with infinite capabilities for perpetuating controversy, if we try to explain and understand the true bearings of the points at issue.

Unity by explanation possible.

The explanations which have been set forth in this book may provoke hostile criticism, but at all events they show that such unity is possible, on the points which have been dealt with, as a legitimate inference from the main facts of Catholic truth and practice, as held and taught in the first six centuries of Church history, to which Dr. Wace appeals.

The value of the teaching of S. Augustine's "Virgo pariens" and "Virgo moriens" as the true defensive bulwarks of the doctrine of "Virgo concipiens," cannot be overestimated. The *conjoint* teaching of these three phrases is the sole safeguard of the Catholic doctrine of the Incarnation. It is confessedly a difficult task to re-adjust previously conceived ideas. A certain insularity of thought, which is partly the outcome of Protestant glosses upon the Anglican formularies, tends to make Anglicans somewhat narrow in their sympathies, and produces, even amongst those who glory in the name of Catholic, a tinge of self complacency which can only be dissipated by a true synthesis of facts as they really are.

Value of S. Augustine's witness to the Miraculous Conception, Miraculous Birth, and *ἀειπαρθενία*.

The spiritual value of Invocation.

of a right use of the Invocation of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints in glory needs to be accepted as a factor in our spiritual development. It is not to be received by us merely as a concession to the practice of Roman and Eastern Christianity, which we are tolerantly prepared to make, for the sake of reunion. It is a helpful reality. Those who use it find comfort in the thought, that the intercessions of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints are offered for those who use it not. The holy incense of these intercessions rises ever before the Throne for those who, through ignorance or invincible

prejudice, never realise the fact that the Blessed Virgin and the Saints pray for them, and consequently never ask for their prayers. To believe in this intercession and never to ask for it, is to ignore the brightest aspect of the Communion of Saints. We may go even farther, and say that a vast spiritual gain, hardly to be measured by the cautious *bonum et utile* of the Council of Trent, lies open to those who not only ask for this intercession, but realise in it the true position of the Communion of Saints in the revelation of Christ's Holy Catholic Church. And especially is this true with regard to a full and free recognition of the unique greatness of the Θεοτόκος, and her relation to the members of Christ in the economy of Redemption.

The due recognition of the Communion of Saints and of the true place of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Catholic Church.

FINIS.

Domine Jesu Christe, Qui dixisti Apostolis Tuis pacem reliquo vobis, pacem Meam do vobis; ne respicias peccata mea, sed fidem Ecclesiæ Tuæ, eamque secundum voluntatem Tuam pacificare et coadunare digneris; Qui vivis et regnas Deus, per omnia sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

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